

GOVERNMENT
IN FASCIST ITALY

BY
H. ARTHUR STEINER

McGRAW-HILL STUDIES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

FRITZ MORSTEIN MARX, Editor

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FOREWORD BY

FRITZ MORSTEIN MARX

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To

CHARLES GROVE HAINES

FOREWORD

There is in this country no dearth of publications on Fascism, but there is always room for a good book. Professor Steiner's well-balanced treatment of present-day Italian government and politics seems to me an outstanding contribution on more than one count. It has all the freshness of firsthand observation, but observation guided by critical reflection and intellectual discipline. It is distinguished by unusual felicity of formulation that makes the reader almost unaware of the painstaking scholarship beneath the flow of lucid passages. It displays an economy of presentation which brings into sharp relief the essentials of Fascism. And it succeeds in a task undertaken by few: to unfold the reality of the Fascist state in its entirety without neglecting aspects such as the integration of Italy's colonial empire and the ascendancy of Fascist "imponderables." In these "imponderables" lies Fascism's challenge.

The temper of the book is actuated neither by love nor by hate. Although the author has nowhere left a doubt as to his own scale of basic values, he has refrained from simply superimposing them upon his exposition of Fascist precepts and modes of action. His aim has not been to substantiate a credo, but to pursue an inquiry. Reexamination is the only constant of the scientific approach. Nor has Professor Steiner returned from his explorations with empty hands. His analysis of Fascism's march to power clarifies the causative force of crisis psychology at a time when economic reconsolidation was already under way. The searching reappraisal accorded the metamorphoses of corporative institutions accentuates the time lag between idea and execution, legislative enactment and organizational establishment. Years of corporative endeavor affected the Fascist economy considerably less than did the changes wrought in a few weeks by the military necessities of the Ethiopian campaign. The author's determination to take nothing for granted gives his study an undertone of wholesome skepti-

cism which deprives political self-glorification of its luster and bares its pragmatic ingredients.

Fascist Italy emerges from this investigation as a world power of unbroken vitality. Fifteen years ago the notion of a Berlin-Rome "axis" would have created mild amusement in European chancelleries; today it signalizes a broad division of ideologies as well as of fundamental national interests. True enough, it is difficult to conceive of a Fascist-National Socialist united front that will hold under all circumstances within the range of potential constellations. But the political advantages of joint action are so patent that it would be bold indeed to consider the "axis" merely a temporary expedient. To understand the precarious conditions under which the "reign of peace" is maintained at the price of localized slaughter requires accurate information on the actual alignment of internal forces that motivate foreign policy. Professor Steiner's book ably marshals the factors on which one should base a considered reply to the fateful query: war or peace?

FRITZ MORSTEIN MARX.

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PREFACE

Democracy and Fascism cannily refuse to divulge their character to the investigator who pursues a single-tracked course. Each abounds in platitudes and slogans of dubious meaning and each has what appear to be irreconcilable contradictions and inconsistencies. Political institutions, wherever found, generally refuse to function in perfect conformity with the plan of the makers; this is as true of Italian government under Fascism as it is of American government under the Constitution. No serious student expects to find in the Constitution of the United States anything more than a few broad hints concerning the practice of American Democracy. He knows enough of the peculiarities of the spoils system, of the intricacies of public opinion, of lobbies and pressure groups, of legislative logrolling, of political machines and bosses, of practical expectations of leadership—enough of these to realize that actual government administration may be widely at variance with the “constitutional spirit.” But, knowing this of American government, he is too often likely to overlook the impact of comparable forces in Fascist Italy, and the departures from Fascist doctrine which they occasion. Yet, if Fascist theory is seldom realized in its extreme form, and if such institutions as the Corporative State mean less in practice than in theory, there is still point in examining them. For these are the conceptual forms through which Fascism works, and it is on the basis of the forms that the expected deviations from the normal are to be weighed and judged.

As the totalitarian state moves forward, cutting across all lines and entering into every phase of human activity, it is inevitable that the attitude of Democracy toward it should crystallize behind a solid wall of prejudicial preconceptions. Tolerance may be claimed only by ideas which are themselves broad enough to acknowledge equal tolerance for other views, and the democrat must necessarily dislike and distrust the totalitarian dictatorship. But a distinction has to be made between tolerance for the theory of Fascism and tolerance and patience in the study of

Fascist institutions. There is danger when the democrat is ignorant that his distaste for Fascism has blinded him to its objective realities. Too often, he dismisses Fascist institutions with a label or epithet. There is, in fact, no one answer to Fascism, no single key which explains its character. It is economic regimentation, but more than that; it retains private property, but is something other than capitalism; it objects to Marxism, but is far more than merely anti-Marxist; it looks to the past, but is not necessarily reactionary; it looks to the future, but is not visionary. It blends into a synthesis various elements: an idealistic political doctrine, the personal ambition of a leader, the technique of a political machine, the competing motives of cupidity and abnegation, of private greed and patriotic zeal for the national good—but no one of the elements entering into the blend can alone explain the quality or character of the synthesis. The present inquiry seeks to examine Fascism through its parts, but as a whole.

This volume combines formal exposition of the governing institutions of Fascism with a critical interpretation of the dynamic forces which color and condition contemporary Italian life. In explaining forms and institutions, the writer aspires to the objectivity expected of the conscientious political scientist. Yet in his interpretations he is unable to divest himself of his affection for democratic and liberal ideas. Nor has he wished to. The bibliography at the end of the volume indicates the major sources of information, but there is that about the Italian literature on Fascism which precludes unquestioned faith in the printed word. Observations of practical techniques and experiences, during a residence in Italy in 1935-1936, have permitted a checking of the written record. To test published and documentary sources by the standards of credibility and plausibility, when no others were available, has been the method. To reflect Fascism in American terms, but as Italians know and understand it, has been the purpose.

H. A. S.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
October, 1937.

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Chapter I

HISTORICAL FORCES IN CONTEMPORARY ITALY

One of the many sparkling facets of Fascism reflects the brilliant light of Italy's historic tradition. As the Fascist regime unblushingly aspires to recreate the imperial glory of Ancient Rome and to kindle the fire of a second Italian Renaissance, it exhorts the past to divulge its key to the future. But Fascism, with two decades of its own tradition, periodically gloats over its memories and vigorously boasts of its superiority over neighboring parvenus spawned by Imperial Rome and presumably jealous of its new Caesar. Periodically the Fascist regime resets the pace of its revolutionary march by indulging energetically in the commemoration of outstanding historic incidents.

Intensive holiday celebrations are characteristic of contemporary dictatorships. No better instrument has been devised for stimulating patriotic instinct, consciousness of national unity, and pride in achievement, and for exploiting mass enthusiasm for the prevailing cause. The light of the past is made to illumine the present. Shabby doctrines and hollow programs somehow acquire a halo of glamour, reviving the faith of the mass in miracles and provoking the craftsmen of the regime to work them. Fascist Italy, conscious of a world "mission," knowingly rewrites history, captures the past for itself, and makes it an unwitting and often abused handmaiden to the present.

Hardly noted for its serious mien, the Italian people welcomes its frequent opportunities to relieve the tedium of a humdrum existence by abandonment to the holiday mood. The foreign visitor is charmed by the naïveté of a wine festival, awed by the majesty of a formal church ceremony, impressed by the intensity of a political celebration. In the best carnival tradition, a convivial populace dons the mask of gaiety and disports itself amidst the festive display of flags and bunting, singing lustily as a band sets the tempo, while pranksters (and pickpockets)

enliven the proceedings. When the occasion is political, as is so often the case under Fascist rule, the foreign observer is mystified—not knowing whether the demonstration is a spontaneous outburst of popular applause for the regime, a coolly planned and skillfully executed propaganda display, or a grotesque fraud perpetrated on a gullible public for the benefit of such foreigners as himself. A Fascist celebration is all three.

With only an occasional elaboration or variation of theme, according to the nature of the event, an Italian political celebration unfolds with routine precision. Yet it manages to achieve a degree of intensity, to aid in the process of deliberately maintaining the official "tension" which the regime thinks characteristic of "strenuous Italy." As the cycle of celebrations passes from one phase to another during the year, the outstanding features of Italian and Fascist history are reviewed. Fortunately for the purposes of propaganda, the anniversaries most zealously observed conveniently group themselves in the spring and fall when, owing to the happy concurrence of the best weather Italy has to offer, popular enthusiasm may be whipped to a jubilant froth.

1. THE SPRING ANNIVERSARIES

March 23 *spiritual*

On this date in 1919, Benito Mussolini summoned some 150 of his followers to meet with him in a dingy room in Piazza San Sepolcro in Milan. There was born the first *fascio*. From that initial impetus, the Fascist movement spread rapidly through Northern and Central Italy, until some 2,000 *fasci* laid the foundation for the march of Fascism to power in October, 1922. March 23, then, is "Founders' Day," commemorated in a spirit designed to recall the "heroism" and "sacrifice" of the Fathers of Fascism. Like the Fathers of the American Revolution, the "San Sepolcrans" have acquired a legendary stature within their lifetime, and the living survivors constitute the aristocracy of Fascism.

Appropriately, tribute is paid to the Fascist *Caduti*, those who, by losing their lives in the desultory street fighting of 1919–1922, have become the martyrs of the Fascist Cause. Pilgrimages are made to their burial places, shrines, and monuments, where

suitable religious ceremonies and political speeches exhort the living to emulate the example of the illustrious dead. There can be no mistaking the importance of this spiritual appeal in the Fascist scheme of things: anyone who renders a vital service to the Cause, particularly if it involves the risk of death, is assured of at least a temporary immortality. He knows that his name will be engraved on generous stone tablets if he yields his life; that his family will be honored in the community; that the crowd will shout a thundrous "*presente*" when his name is reached in the call of names without which no solemn Party conclave is complete.

Mussolini may be expected to honor the day with a special message to the Fascists. Occasionally, as on March 23, 1936, when he addressed the National Assembly of Corporations, Mussolini may enlarge upon some current Fascist policy and allow to foreign correspondents a journalistic field day. But before the day is over, the Fascist Party will somehow manage to transform the solemnity of its early hours, and the joyous note will be struck before nightfall.

April 21

Rome - copy - material

Remus and Romulus suckling the wolf of Rome is a trademark of Roman Italy. Although uncertainty shrouds the founding of the City of Rome, April 21 has been arbitrarily selected as the date. Mussolini's ambition to reconstruct in the modern era a Rome and an Italy worthy of the spiritual and material tradition of Ancient Rome explains the fervor with which ~~Fascists~~ celebrate the founding of the city. Since Ancient Rome was noted for its public works and constructions, this is one of the two days in the year (the other being October 28) set aside for the formal dedication of the public works completed by the Fascist regime during the preceding six months.

April 21 has also been celebrated, since 1922, as Labor Day. The labor syndicates schedule a formal meeting for this day, to rejoice in the new "freedom" which labor enjoys under syndical-corporative auspices. On this *Festa del Lavoro* there will be a rereading of the Labor Charter which the Fascist Grand Council promulgated on April 21, 1927; laudatory speeches will review the contributions of the regime to the labor cause and will restate its promises for the future. As March 23 commemorates

the spiritual founding of Fascism, April 21 pays tribute to its more material accomplishments in the field of social endeavor.

May 9 *Imperial (Ethiopia)*

Every present indication points to the celebration of May 9 as an event equaled in importance only by March 23 and October 28. Four days following the occupation of Addis Ababa, Mussolini summoned a special *adunata*, or assembly, to hear him proclaim the establishment of Italian sovereignty over all Ethiopia. The celebration of May 9, 1936, was genuine and spontaneous, partly from the shock of surprise that the Ethiopian campaign had been terminated so quickly, partly from relief that a different conclusion had been avoided, partly from jubilation over the failure of the sanctions "siege" by which the League of Nations had sought to discourage the enterprise. With proclamation of the Fascist Empire—Mussolini became the "Founder of the Empire"—King Vittorio Emanuele III took unto himself the additional title, "Emperor of Ethiopia," and the beginning of the Year I of the Fascist Empire initiated a new calendar. Plans for the commemoration of the event in 1937 were laid by the high command of the Fascist Party as early as January. The fervid celebration of May 9 commemorates Fascist Italy's "reversal" of the decision of the Paris Peace Conference, and marks the imperial maturity of contemporary Italy as it takes its first step in the direction of creating the Second Roman Empire. From the new Italian East Africa, Italy proposes to increase her political power and influence in the Mediterranean. The colonial "conscience" of Italy has been stimulated by a barren propaganda extending over several decades; May 9 now offers a concrete occasion for rallying support to the regime as it proceeds to what it hopes to be greater and more glorious imperial expansion.

May 24 - *Burg Fox - become party member*

As a member of the Triple Alliance, Italy was under an obligation to render assistance to the Central Powers upon the outbreak of the World War in August, 1914. The attendant circumstances were such that the Italian government was justified in asserting that the *casus foederis* was nonexistent, the Central Powers having not been victims of attack. Understanding was general

that the Italian government would ultimately enter the war with that coalition of powers best able to offer adequate compensation; and preferably on the side of the Allies, as the powers in the best position to guarantee the return of *Italia irredenta*, in Austrian hands. Negotiations begun early in 1915 produced, on April 26, 1915, the secret Treaty of London, which promised Italy not only lands occupied by persons ethnically Italian, but also the equivalent of an Adriatic Lake, land in Africa, and some of the Mediterranean territories of doomed Turkey. Accordingly, Italy declared war on May 24, 1915.

Mussolini had made Italy's entry into the war his own cause as early as November, 1914. His influence was negligible, his voice almost unheard, but his *Popolo d'Italia* editorialized vigorously, and the interventionist nuclei, organized by Mussolini, aided in crystallizing public opinion. The goal of the interventionists was not attained merely with the declaration of war, and Mussolini was one of many who struggled against the "defeatist" elements in Italy which constantly sought peace, particularly after the rout at Caporetto. As a result, Mussolini and his Fascists have taken credit not only for Italy's entry, but for Italy's constancy to the cause until the victory was won, only to be "lost" by democratic politicians at the Peace Conference. *

May 24, to Fascists, symbolizes the exercise by Italians of a free and independent sovereign judgment, their belligerency, their willingness to fight for the cause thought by them to be right. Throughout Italy, on May 24, troops mobilize to hold colorful reviews. But to the Fascist Party, the date has the significance of a political mobilization of its own forces: this is now the date upon which the Fascist *Leva* occurs, the annual event whereby Young Fascists acquire the status of Party membership, and members of the youth organizations, generally, proceed formally to enter into more advanced organizations and to take the oath of allegiance. A joyous solemnity prevails as the Party, invigorated by its new blood, once again pledges its support to Italy's historic "mission."

2. THE FALL ANNIVERSARIES

During the humid Italian summer, political activity is usually at low ebb. The freshening air of autumn brings with it a

renewal of propaganda activity, and, after five months of vacation, the Italian people again falls into line, to celebrate, within one month, four anniversaries.

October 28 - *March on Rome 1922*

Fascist Italy's equivalent to the American Fourth of July is October 28, anniversary of the March on Rome (1922), and the celebration par excellence of the regime. This marks the end of the year, under the Fascist calendar: October 28, 1937, in the Year XV of the Fascist Era, yields to October 29, 1937-XVI. Symbolically, all memberships in Party organizations expire at that time, and early October 29 the Secretary of the Party pays a state visit to Palazzo Venezia to present to *Il Duce* his Membership Card Number One for the next year. Mussolini's participation in the ceremonies of October 28 begins with the publication of his annual message to the Fascists, and is followed, in the course of the day, by his dedication of various newly completed public works.

Mussolini generally remains in Rome for the occasion. Throughout the day, the crowd gathers in Piazza Venezia, below his famous double-windowed balcony, to await his personal appearance, shouting the rhythmic cry: *Duce! Duce! Duce!* until he condescends to respond. Saluting in the "Roman style," right arm held aloft, *Il Duce* acclaims the crowd; the Party Secretary calls for the *Saluto al Duce*, and the mass thunders back the expected *A Noi!* Mussolini then delivers a few pungent sentences of greeting and challenge, an "informal" speech which is seldom reproduced textually in the Italian press. The perfect showman takes his bows, and returns for one or two encores, until, with a final Roman salute, he signals the end of the proceedings. The thrilled crowd slowly disperses, suffused with the electric glow with which Mussolini always warms his listeners. Throughout all Italy similar demonstrations occur, with local Party hierarchs in the leading roles, and the streets resound to the tramp of marching Black Shirts, echo to the massed singing of the Fascist hymn, *Giovinezza*. Another Fascist year turns the corner.

November 4

Exactly one week after the most important Fascist anniversary, the mobs again move through the streets, this time to

commemorate the Armistice Day of 1918. Associations of war veterans, of war widows, and of retired officers join the Fascist phalanxes in paying tribute to the war dead, in celebrating the Italian victory over Austria. That their Armistice Day preceded by one week the Armistice on the Western Front is always taken by Fascists as proof that it was Italy that won the war and first made possible the general peace. Newspaper editorials and radio speakers reexamine the old argument: Did Austria collapse under the pressure of internal political and economic forces (as historians generally agree) or under the crushing Italian military victory at Vittorio Veneto (as Italians and Fascists claim)? A quotation attributed to von Ludendorff is annually advanced to support the Fascist contention and to serve as the text of the day. Italy's national inferiority complex colors the day, as Europe's injustices to Italy are patiently reviewed, as Italy plaintively begs for recognition of her "rights." More recently the plaintive note has yielded to one of challenging demand.

In Rome, attention focuses at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier which lies at the foot of the gigantic monument to Vittorio Emanuele II, conveniently located but a few yards from Palazzo Venezia, where the Dictator again awaits within for the appeals of the crowd. Long into the night, lighted kerosene flares make of the monument a beacon which attracts the restless feet of the populace. On a smaller scale, the scene is reproduced in all Italian cities and towns.

November 11

For almost four decades Italians have participated in celebrating the birthday of the present king, Vittorio Emanuele III, born November 11, 1869. Following as it does so closely upon two anniversaries marked with the distinctive Fascist trademark, the celebration of the King's Birthday is tolerated by the Fascist regime, which finds it useful to exploit the genuine allegiance of the population for its king. The military interests of Vittorio Emanuele III give to the occasion a martial air. With his distinguished "cousin" at his side—Mussolini became officially a cousin of the King when he became a *cavaliere* in the Supreme Order of the *SS. Annunziata*—the King reviews his troops in Rome, while the Prince of Piedmont (the Crown Prince) and the brothers of the King perform similar honors

elsewhere. The day does much to heighten the patriotic sentiment and consciousness of the national unity which Fascists brought to Italy.

November 18

Commemoration of the ~~founding of the Fascist Empire~~ on May 9 is balanced in the fall by commemoration of "Sanctions Day." The future of this event is problematical, but in 1935 and 1936 it was sponsored by the Fascists with telling effect. This is Italy's national day of humiliation, self-perpetuated. On November 18, 1935, six weeks after the Ethiopian campaign began, the League of Nations enforced its sanctions against Italy, and thereby the corporative state received its first serious test. Italians, made aware of their "rights" and "just claims" against Ethiopia by a long-standing propaganda, naturally resented that expression of collective world disapproval. They found that Mussolini's "mere colonial adventure" had become an event of world importance, and that Italy was not only fighting Ethiopia but the rest of the world as well. The Ethiopian campaign became a Fascist religious crusade. The Fascist Grand Council decided, in 1935, that the "atrocity" committed by Italy's anti-Fascist enemies should be made the subject of memorial tablets, erected on the walls of all public buildings; these were dedicated with religious solemnity, in the midst of national mourning, on November 18, 1936. Italians regard their victory over Ethiopia, despite sanctions, as the final vindication of their colonial claims, and participate in the commemoration of November 18 to honor those who lost their lives in East Africa and to shame the rest of the world for its misguided zeal. In a word, "Sanctions Day" celebrates the assumption by Italy of her "undisputed primacy" among the powers of the world! The Fascist Party does not fail to capitalize upon the emotional fervor of the day.

* * *

Thus, the cycle of Fascist celebrations comes to its official close, only a month before the holidays of the Church. For a while, at least, business and commerce pursue their uninterrupted, normal course, while the forces of the regime move with accented step and accelerated pace, resolutely intent upon meeting the next crisis in full stride.

Upon this stage is enacted the drama of Fascism.

Chapter II

MUSSOLINI AND THE FASCIST MARCH TO POWER

1. MUSSOLINI'S ROLE

"Audacity!"—the keynote of the interventionist movement, sounded by Mussolini in the first issue of his *Popolo d'Italia*,¹ was equally the keynote of Fascism in its formative years. Not only was it audacious—it was absurd, preposterous, utterly impossible! Yet Mussolini made Fascism a reality by his mastery of many and contradictory forces, shaping them to produce the March on Rome and the Fascist regime. (The Fascist regime is the superorganization constructed by the will to power of one man who, seeking to register protest against materialist determinism, proved for Nietzsche that the power of personality is not a negligible force in the shaping of human destiny.)

Realization that the emergence of the masses has given a new orientation to all politics, and particularly to the politics of dictatorship, does not require full acceptance of Ortega y Gasset's brilliant interpretation.² Mussolini and Hitler exemplify the modern dictator who rises from the mass which he dominates and without whose support he could not long survive. Technological advance has given prospective dictators potent weapons for shaping the new, inert mass which the same technology has also produced—the new mass, quantitatively much greater, its individual components hopelessly but keenly aware of their dependence upon technique. Mussolini was the first to perceive and profit from the new laws of mass politics and mass psychology. (Mussolini, the mass-man par excellence, used the mass as the fulcrum for asserting his own dominance over it. His eminent qualification for this, the secret of his success, is the unusual and extraordinary degree to which he is the common man.) The sacro egoismo of Italy has invested his person and, whether the common man likes it or not, Mussolini expresses his own aspirations.

Recognition of Mussolini's remarkable talent is fairly universal. His political genius, however, lies not in his possession of oratorical and organizational abilities of high order but in his unusual skill in adapting them to new political conditions. He has beaten the demagogues at their own game, with their own weapons, but is more than the super-demagogue the statement implies. Power lust is restrained by consciousness that his own immortality rests upon success in crowning power with the laurels of constructive statesmanship. As the mass-man, he seeks to unravel the intricacies of the mass mind, to shape and liberate, in the form of a new and more powerful Italy, peopled with more and better Italians, the mass impulse as he understands it. That the programs and policies produced by this egoism may be artificial or wrong does not impeach the popular foundations upon which they rest.

To begin with, Mussolini is the proletarian whose appeals are addressed to "Fascist and proletarian Italy."³ Inauspiciously born of a schoolteacher mother and a blacksmith father,⁴ Mussolini exhibits the virtues and vices of an Italian of the lower middle class. Although now softened by the mellowing influences of good food and advancing years, Mussolini's is still the earthy physique of a workman. Fifteen years of power have only sharpened his proletarian disgust for the effeminate decadence of the blue-blooded aristocracy.

Those with whom he comes in contact never fail to be entranced and overpowered by his vital and tremendous personality. The cold, printed text of a Mussolini speech cannot convey to the reader the sensuous ardor and vehemence of expression that burn an Italian crowd to an emotional crisp. An Italian thinks of Mussolini in terms of his vibrant, flashing eyes.

There is more to Mussolini, however, than earthiness and mass hypnotics. Family environment, the honest intelligence of his mother and the active political interests of his father, developed and sharpened his mentality. Extensive reading in Marx, Sorel, and Pareto, combined with travel in Austria and Switzerland, made him something of a cosmopolite with a practical knowledge of affairs. His enemies deride him for his Napoleonic delusions, for his pretension to the toga of the Caesars, but they cannot accuse him of senility or laziness. Anxious to earn respect on his merits, Mussolini seeks to excel in every activity

in which he participates, whether in piloting an airship, driving a motorcycle, riding a horse, learning a foreign language, or guiding the ship of state. Keeness of mind, capacity for long hours of concentrated work, genuine interest and excitement, enable him to work steadily—hearing reports, preparing state papers, keeping his finger on the public pulse. His associates seem to respect him apart from fiat, often attribute to him powers of political omniscience, and are confident that he will ferret out their errors as he will reward their services. Burden of office has aged the man, has softened him; an ingratiating, confident grin tends to replace the forced jutting of an iron jaw. Temperament and mood seldom impair his sense of showmanship. His personal qualities appear perfectly suited to the office which he has created.

The bog of consistency never annoys this political chameleon; instead his peccadillos have become pillars of political power. Mussolini's prewar political affiliations were with the Socialists. His professional interests were those of a politician journalist. After an apprenticeship as editor of a provincial Socialist weekly, *La Lotta di Classe* (*The Class Struggle*), Mussolini became editor, at the age of twenty-nine, of the important *Avanti!* (*Forward!*). Despite high responsibilities in Socialist circles, Mussolini failed to accept all the Marxian fundamentals, notably its internationalism. This he illustrated with his protest against the Italo-Turkish War of 1911–1912, to which he objected on purely *nationalistic* grounds, arguing that the acquisition of Libya would increase Italian responsibilities and dissipate Italian resources, and thereby weaken the nation. Practical experience with revolutionary doctrine colored his entire outlook and does much to explain why a substantial amount of non-Marxian Socialism is found in Fascist Italy.

Mussolini had the good fortune, at the two turning points of his political life, to find that his personal ambitions coincided with the interests of powerful forces. He first profited from this in 1914 when, after speaking softly during the first months of the war, he realized that the restless youngsters eager to combat Austria for the sake of *Italia irredenta* would rally to a self-appointed leader. Advocating intervention, he lost his position with *Avanti!*, was expelled from the Socialist Party, and founded his own *Popolo d'Italia*. The interest of the Allies in Italian

intervention was obvious, and no attempt has been made to refute the assertion that the French Foreign Office supplied financial assistance for the new paper and its editor. French aid may have been the effect as well as the cause of Mussolini's defection, for his early record shows that he may have had reasons of his own for desiring Austria's defeat. But Mussolini was always more than a French pawn, and his subsequent independence gave the Quai d'Orsay more than one headache. Again, luck was with him after the war, when the former Socialist returned in the uncomfortable situation of a leader without a political following. This time his personal ambition coincided with the interests of industrialists in preventing social unrest; there was nothing to prevent him from receiving fresh aid from "respectable" Italians who regarded the specter of Bolshevism with alarm. He aided the deception. But that he traded undying allegiance to the capitalists in return for their support to his movement cannot be demonstrated, and in fact more than one Italian industrialist has lived to regret his shortsightedness.

Despite its institutionalization, the Fascist regime is still to be interpreted in terms of Mussolini, who has never permitted the party and organization to escape his control. His susceptibility to inconsistency and compromise, his personal ambition, his conception of beneficent intentions, his power and vigor—these are inevitably the implicit reservations which attend and color every discussion of government and politics in Fascist Italy.

2. FROM MOVEMENT TO PARTY

Fascist writers are fond of the idea of "movement"—of what they interpret as the instinctive mass response when Mussolini proposed direct action to protect the *patria* from its foes at home and abroad. The "movement" phase of Fascism covers the interval between the founding of the first *fascio* at Milan on March 23, 1919, and the formation of the Fascist Party in November, 1921. As a movement, Fascism had no program. What suggestions of program were contained in Mussolini's speeches and occasional manifestoes were infinitely less important than the impromptu actions of Fascist squads. The spirit of *squad-rismo* was not the spirit of a party platform. Mussolini's message on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Milan

fascio contained a typical definition of the Fascist "program" of 1921:

Fascism is a great mobilization of material and moral forces. What do we propose? We answer without false modesty: to govern the nation. With what program? With the program necessary to insure the moral and material greatness of the Italian people. . . . We do not believe in dogmatic programs. . . . We allow ourselves the luxury of being aristocrats and democrats; conservatives and progressives; reactionaries and revolutionaries; legitimists and illegitimists, according to the conditions of time, place, and circumstance. . . . Fascism . . . is not a party, it is a movement; it does not have a pretty program to be realized in the year 2000 for the simple reason that Fascism builds the structure of its will and passion from day to day.⁵

The "material and moral forces" mobilized by Fascism were many. (1) Industrialists, with exaggerated fears of Bolshevism, supplied financial aid and hoped, thereby, to tame the movement; (2) many workers, pinched by economic conditions, not class conscious in the Marxian sense or else distrustful of Socialist leadership, found some solace and hope in Mussolini's promises to labor; (3) the Freemasons, politically active as a group and sentimentally opposed to Marxism, gave aid as late as 1923, when they were disavowed; (4) a military clique, described by Salvemini as a "Black Hand," aspired to domination over civil politicians in Rome and made no attempt to break up seditious Fascist demonstrations; (5) war veterans, highly susceptible to nationalist propaganda, excited by D'Annunzio's example in Fiume, hoped to confirm their military victory in the political sphere; (6) Italian romanticists found the Fascist movement a fertile source of lyrical inspiration in its appeal for heroic—if senseless—sacrifice, and unwittingly propagandized for Mussolini and supplied glamour to the cause; (7) politicians of the Giolitti type expected to extract from the turbulence which Mussolini introduced into politics generally some profit for themselves, and lent moral support by their inaction; and finally (8) there was Mussolini, a personal power in himself, skillfully extracting from every combination of circumstances the greatest possible advantage. This catalogue of forces and interests illustrates the breadth and catholicity of the Fascist appeal. Depth did not necessarily accompany breadth, and for several years the recruits to the Fascist movement from these different groups

represented only outspoken minorities in their respective categories; this is true of the industrialists, politicians, and militarists, and probably more true of the workers.

In precisely the same way that Mussolini's "program" attracted at least a few adherents from every walk of Italian life, so the Fascist propaganda capitalized upon the imperfections of social and political life, exaggerating them until they had been converted into threats to the very existence of the nation.

1. In the field of foreign affairs, the nationalists were dissatisfied with the conclusions of the Paris Conference. Italy received, in the postwar settlement, the Istrian Peninsula and the Trentino, long claimed as Italian areas, even though substantial numbers of non-Italians were found in both areas. The Peace Conference did reject a well-grounded claim to the City of Fiume, and a less reasonable claim to the entire Dalmatian Coast. Out of this situation, Fascist propaganda created the illusion that Italy had won the war and had been defeated in the peace. This became the basic Fascist appeal, directed to war veterans, sentimentalists, and professional nationalists, and productive of more support for the movement than any other appeal.

2. In the economic sphere, Fascists now claim that it was only through their action that Italy was saved from utter economic collapse. The economic depression which struck Italy, as it did other countries, was accompanied by the usual quota of business failures and bank crashes; war industries were closed; railroads and means of communication had been disrupted by military contingencies; the normal channels of Italian commerce were impaired; and there was an unpleasant volume of unemployment. It is difficult to deny that these things were true, but Fascism laid the blame for them at the door of democracy and liberalism. However, Italian economy was actually far from dead. Gaetano Salvemini has compiled an impressive documentation to illustrate the fallacies of the Fascist contention, and from the statistics collated in the annual *Prospettive economiche* of Giorgio Mortara it appears that Italian economy definitely turned the corner a year before Mussolini marched on Rome.⁶ Refutation of Fascist claims on this score, however, only accentuates the personal influence of Mussolini, who may have realized (although this is doubtful) that action needed to be taken before the economic situation completely clarified itself.

Recent studies of public opinion very clearly demonstrate how great is the time lag between an economic upturn and general public perception of the fact. Silent statistics are of little avail against bitter memories. Once the feeling that "something must be done" gains widespread acceptance, as it did in many quarters in Italy in 1921-1922, a strong leader may easily swing the tide in his favor by decisive action.

3. Fascism has taken credit for forestalling an imminent Bolshevik revolution. This argument is not answered by the assertion that economic conditions prohibited the Bolshevik alternative, but by an examination of left-wing strength in 1921-1922. Socialist strength grew with the elections of November, 1919, but, for reasons to be explained, the elections of May, 1921, witnessed a decided reduction in their power. Socialist city councils, occasional governments under Socialist auspices (Bonomi), sporadic strikes and labor disturbances, and threats of a general strike lent some plausibility to the Fascist point of view. But between a declining Socialist movement and a genuine Bolshevik organization a distinction must be made, and it is clear that organized Bolshevism was nonexistent as a political force. The anti-Bolshevism of Fascism was a potent rallying cry, a source of great strength, and, whether justified or not, it has become one of the permanent foundations of Fascist policy, the theme most frequently pronounced in Italy. Future historians are likely to regard the irrational public response at the cry of "Bolshevism" as one of the characteristic political earmarks of the first postwar decade. The red herring earned for Mussolini invaluable support from small middle-class property holders, as well as from industrialists and war veterans.

4. Mussolini also capitalized on the decadence of democratic institutions. Democracy, as a popular, human institution, is as replete with flaws and defects as human nature itself. Italian experience between 1919-1922 probably exhibited the defects of democracy in its details more effectively than elsewhere. Mussolini pointed to the cupidity of politicians and to their corruption; he remarked upon the deterioration of authority under democratic forms, and the prevalence of disorder; he worked consistently upon the idea that the welfare of the Italian nation and its life for the future depended upon the establishment of strong, decisive governmental power. Between 1919 and 1922,

Italian cabinets fell with greater than average rapidity. The presence of many political parties prevented the organization of coalitions of long duration. During its brief tenure, a government rested upon a precarious balance which discouraged drastic and effective action or strong policy.⁷ Political power was as ineffective as it was precarious, and the very fact that a movement of the character of Fascism flourished and was actually permitted to organize to capture Rome is evidence of political-administrative weakness. The political situation discouraged strong men from assuming responsibilities. The result was that the inept Facta—"one of the biggest idiots of all times and all countries"⁸—gave the Fascists their immediate opportunity with his bungling tactics in October, 1922.

* * *

There is no denying, however, that political and economic turbulence in postwar Italy produced a revolutionary temper. The Fascist movement rapidly became outstanding among the causes of unrest, and ultimately prevented the democratic government from maintaining the order which the Fascists professed among their motives. The temper of Italy after the war differed markedly from the temper of England and France, other victors. Italy's military victory was a dubious one, and none of the Allies, except Russia, had suffered a rout comparable to Caporetto. Throughout the war, pacifist and defeatist forces prevented consolidation of public opinion in a unified war front. There was less likelihood of consolidation of a national front after the war, with struggles between Socialists and Nationalists, government and army, workers and profiteers, industrialists and politicians. The addition of Fascism to warring forces precluded the assertion of government strength through normal channels. Whether the revolution in the air would be of the right or of the left was the only debatable question.

The sharp and decisive break came as early as September, 1920, when the first sit-down strike of modern times found workers in possession of the great industrial establishments of Lombardy and Piedmont. This posed an issue for the Socialists. They had won a definite victory in the elections of November, 1919, emerging with the largest group in the Chamber, but lacking an absolute majority. Had they risen to the emergency of 1920,

their future success would have been assured, and Fascism definitely forestalled. While the northern industrial plants were in workers' hands, with red banners fluttering at flagstaves; while Giolitti, the Prime Minister, steadfastly refused the demand of the proprietors for aid in expelling the workers; while local city councils and police stood by inactively, the Socialists refused an offer of the wily Giolitti by which the laboring class might have become a potent controlling force in Italian industry. Divided in counsels, suspecting a political trap, the Socialists failed to comprehend the situation. Within a week, the factory occupation collapsed. Thereafter, as Mussolini's star steadily rose, the Socialists found no other comparable opportunity opened to them.

George Slocombe, a competent British Labour journalist on the spot, has fairly weighed the alternatives of the day: J

Two years before his [Mussolini's] advent to power, another opportunity for dictatorship presented itself. . . . It was offered to the Socialists, and refused. Their refusal alone, on an historical occasion, of an opportunity not to be repeated, opened the road to Mussolini and the Italian Fascists. The fact that they feared, where Mussolini dared . . . is, I think, the fundamental if unavowed reason for the Italian Socialists' hatred and fear of Mussolini, and the reason for the contemptuous ruthlessness with which he has pursued them. . . .

I was an eye-witness, and sympathetic to the Socialists. I have not since lost that sympathy, or gained another for Mussolini. But the objective chronicler in me gives the verdict against the Socialists. The fact that they were taking a big chance does not mitigate, in the cold eyes of history, their failure to grasp the swinging helm that their adversaries seized. The ship of State was drifting; there was neither a leader at the wheel nor a course available to steer by. Government was at a standstill. The authority of King, Premier, Police and Army was derided. A revolution of some kind, Left or Right, was logically inevitable. The Socialists shrank from it. The Communists were weak in numbers, divided in counsel. The renegade from pre-war Socialism, the pacifist turned patriot, took the perilous leap. . . .

Actually, when the time came for the leap, there was little peril for Mussolini. The way had been well paved by the development of Fascist propaganda and by the brutal and unlawful direct action of Fascist squads.

Events of the first year following the organization of the Milan *fascio* were more spectacular than significant. Inspired by

Mussolini's example, and with the aid of his organizers, local leaders such as Farinacci in Cremona and De Vecchi in Turin formed independent *fasci*. While strikes had begun, attention was focused on questions of foreign policy. D'Annunzio, a far greater figure than Mussolini in those days, gave the Fascist his first opportunity to popularize the cause when his troops in occupation of Fiume needed financial aid and food. In sixty cities of northern Italy, Fascists conducted the necessary fanfare, while the Italian government confessed its lack of control over the mutineers. During the Fiume crisis, the delayed parliamentary elections—there had been none since 1913—took place. Fascists had previously given no attention to electoral tactics, but a central committee, hastily convened at Milan, decided that the local *fasci* should identify themselves with the local blocs most inclined to adopt an intransigent policy in foreign affairs. Mussolini entered his own name in Milan and polled several thousand votes. No Fascist deputy was elected, and Fascist influences in shaping government policy or influencing other party programs were entirely negligible.

The elections of November, 1919, failed to clarify the political atmosphere. Francesco Nitti remained premier despite Socialist gains until ousted by Giolitti in June, 1920. Mussolini took advantage of Giolitti's hesitancy to urge a more drastic course of action upon Fascist squads. As in Germany, the apparent freedom from restraint which the squadrists enjoyed enticed thousands of young converts into the Fascist ranks, and when elections were unexpectedly sprung upon the country in May, 1921, the Fascist strength had definitely improved. Still lacking formal political organization, the Fascists then decided to enter the campaign as a political faction. They surprised the country as well as themselves by polling some 200,000 votes and returning 31 deputies.

The responsibility of leading the sixth largest group among the dozen in the chamber made Mussolini cognizant of the need of converting the Fascist movement into a political party. Prepared with knowledge of Mussolini's plan, representatives, so it was claimed, of 2,220 *fasci* with a membership of 300,000, met in Rome as the Third National Congress and formally agreed to the "internal systematization of the Fascist movement." On November 8, 1921, the central committee was instructed to pre-

pare the party statute, which was proclaimed on November 23, 1921.¹⁰ Thereby the Fascist Party was declared to be "a voluntary militia in the service of the nation," which developed its activity "in accordance with three cardinal principles: Order, Discipline, Hierarchy." Shortly thereafter, when Rossoni's syndicates, which claimed 500,000 members, became Fascist syndicates, men and machinery were ready to move forward to the March on Rome.

3. THE FASCIST CONQUEST OF POWER

Nearly every political revolution begins as did Mussolini's. In a period of stress and discomfort an organizer appears to take upon himself leadership of a movement to stimulate agitation. The established regime subjects itself to hypnosis, closing its eyes to what it calls "fanciful dangers." Finding their counsel of no avail, more alert adherents of the established order are likely to scuttle the ship and take refuge with the revolutionaries, thereby supplying it with an indispensable reservoir of informed and able leadership. As the original leaders observe the miracle, they ponder a course of action. Occasionally, if they are mindful of a genuine revolutionary mission, of the need of rooting out the old regime, they are likely to strike with force. If, as more often happens, the significance of the occasion is lost to the leader of the moment, his eyes are turned, not to revolution, but to power. He knows that his contemplated action is treasonable, and he secretly distrusts the allegiance of his cohorts and the loyalty of his own ringleaders. From these doubts emerges the decision to take power, yes, but within the forms of the constitution if possible. To this end, a display of force may be useful.

As the revolutionary force reaches for power, there occurs the "revolutionary act," without which the transition to a new order cannot take place. The revolutionary act may be the adoption of a manifesto, the climax of an intrigue, a display of force, or an act of force. Mussolini was aided in reaching a judgment on tactics by the Socialists, who called a general strike in August, 1922. The strike was a fiasco; Prime Minister Facta resigned; but Facta, no stronger than before, was commissioned to form a new government.

Mussolini seized this moment to order his Black Shirts into the breach, to break the strike by crushing the "Bolshevik"

agitators and operating the public utilities. By the end of August, Mussolini found that his conduct had won him additional support and that the government had demonstrated itself even less able than usual to cope with the growing force of Fascism. That the Fascists proposed to take over power was an open secret, shouted from every house top, publicized in every Fascist news organ. Throughout the fall, Fascist leaders laid their plans. By the middle of October, fasci in many towns had constituted themselves local juntas, forcing "subversive" city councilmen out of office and out of town, if not treating them more harshly, taking into their own hands control of the local police and public authority, and occasionally, out of sheer insolence, locking police behind the bars of their own jails. The crescendo approached when Mussolini called a meeting at Naples on October 24 to discuss the final tactics. Simultaneously the Fascists took over local governments at a faster rate and, under the direction of the four Quadrumvirs, the militarized Black Shirt detachments began to mobilize at strategic points. From Milan, to which he returned after the Naples meeting, Mussolini flashed the signal. The dismayed Facta resigned and the *Popolo d'Italia* carried a war bulletin of October 28, 1922:

The great part of Northern Italy is under the full power of the Fascists. Central Italy—Tuscany, Umbria, The Marches, Upper Lazio—is occupied by Black-shirts. Where the police and prefectural offices have not been taken by force, Fascists have occupied the railway stations and post-offices, the great nerve-centers of national life. The political authority—a little surprised and greatly dismayed—is incapable of opposing the movement. . . .

Fascism will not abuse its victory, but intends that it should not be lessened. Let this be clear to everyone. . . . Fascism wills to power and will have it!

Facta, still holding office *ad interim*, besought the King to proclaim martial law, but was refused. As the Fascists marched toward Rome, converging from three directions, the army held its peace and the King, realizing that only Mussolini could now form a government, summoned him by telephone on October 29. With the King's commission, Mussolini formed his government as the Fascists moved through the *Porta del Popolo* to the Quirinale Palace. The revolutionary act, the March on Rome, had been completed by long-distance display of force. The actual entry

of the Black Shirts into Rome followed Mussolini's designation by the King as Prime Minister, and Mussolini's first important public act was to demonstrate that they were under his control. Within 24 hours after their entry, Mussolini ordered them home. The anticipated struggle for Rome had become a dress parade.

In the organization of his government, Mussolini exhibited remarkable restraint. Only four Fascists, holding five portfolios, were included, together with representatives of the Nationalists, Liberals, and even one Social Democrat. Mussolini took for himself the Foreign Affairs and Interior portfolios, turning the military posts over to Marshal Diaz, Italy's war hero (War), and Grand Admiral of the Fleet Thaon di Revel (Marine). It was made clear to all members of the cabinet that they were not regarded as representatives of their parties in the old sense, but were accountable only to Mussolini. Mussolini was to accept full responsibility and proposed to solicit from Parliament a grant of power commensurate with that responsibility.

On November 16, 1922, Mussolini, who had been neither a minister nor an undersecretary, and who was still viewed as a somewhat foolish amateur, faced the Chamber of Deputies for the first time, the chamber in which only 6 per cent of the seats were held by Fascists. To the chamber he administered the bitter medicine of biting, sarcastic rebuke and, perhaps as a justification of his attitude, was warmly applauded! Demanded of the chamber was a vote of confidence and a blanket authorization to conduct the affairs of government. The supine chamber immediately agreed.

NOTES

1. November 15, 1914.
2. In his *Revolt of the Masses*, New York, 1932.
3. Speech of October 2, 1935, at the *adunata* preceding the Ethiopian campaign.
4. At Varana di Costa, in the Romagna, near Forlì, July 29, 1883. See Mussolini, *My Autobiography*, New York, 1928, written with unusual frankness.
5. Mussolini's speeches have been too frequently printed to require citation. The definitive edition, published by Hoepli, Milan, under the title, *Scritti e discorsi*, is the best collection. Speeches and manifestoes of the early period are available in A. Turati, *Le origini e lo sviluppo del fascismo*, Rome, 1928, from which the present quotation is translated (p. 129). The more important addresses of 1914-1923 have been sympa-

thetically translated into English: Quaranta di San Severino, *Mussolini as Revealed in His Political Speeches* (November, 1914–August, 1923), London and New York, 1923.

6. G. Salvemini, *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy*, New York, 1926; *Under the Axe of Fascism*, New York, 1936, *passim*. Salvemini must be read with care: he is not disinterested, but conscious of an anti-Fascist mission, a historian extraordinarily gifted with a capacity for polemical invective. The data which he presents, however, are vital to the formation of a sound judgment, an indispensable antidote for Fascist propaganda. His analysis is more objective than that of doctrinaire Marxist anti-Fascists.
7. From January 21, 1860, to June 23, 1919, 53 ministries held office, averaging nearly 14 months each. The following held office after the resignation of Orlando on June 23, 1919:
 - Nitti: June 23, 1919–May 21, 1920
 - Nitti: May 21, 1920–June 15, 1920
 - Giolitti: June 15, 1920–July 4, 1921
 - Bonomi: July 4, 1921–February 26, 1922
 - Facta: February 26, 1922–August 1, 1922
 - Facta: August 1, 1922–October 31, 1922
 - Mussolini: October 31, 1922–
8. Salvemini, *Fascist Dictatorship*, p. 112.
9. From Slocombe, G., *The Tumult and the Shouting*, pp. 100–101, New York, 1936. By permission of The Macmillan Company, Publishers.
10. *Popolo d'Italia*, same date.

Chapter III

FASCIST DOCTRINE

To the question "What is Fascism?" a variety of answers is given. Socialists, and those schooled in Marxist thought, reply that Fascism is an artificial economic doctrine conceived to protect the interests of the capitalist class. John Strachey, a prolific writer on this theme, has said: "Fascism always and everywhere [is] a movement owned and controlled by the great capitalists. . . . The twin functions of Fascism, as shown by the deeds of every Fascist government, are (a) to destroy all possibility of resistance to the will of the greatest monopoly capitalists, and (b) to restore the rate of profit by unprecedented wage reductions."¹ To liberals and democrats, Fascism is a political "reversion to autocracy," a denial of human values. As Professor Spencer puts it: "The outstanding fact is that Mussolinian Italy has become the place where liberty is not ill-protected and ignored but positively exultingly scorned. Mussolini himself has boasted of the readiness of Fascism to trample upon the 'more or less decomposed body of the Goddess of Liberty.'"² Fascism is all that Professor Spencer claims for it, is partly what Mr. Strachey claims for it. But to Fascists themselves their doctrine is a return to the true path—one that provides regulation for economics and restraint for individual liberties to the end that the spiritualized values of the State, the embodiment of the nation, may be suitably enhanced and respected. The doctrine, as they understand and express it, must first be examined to establish a basis for discussion and criticism.

Doctrine performs the dual function of defining the spirit and objectives of a political movement and of supplying the standards by which its success or failure is to be judged. In proportion as the World War threw into sharp relief the close interrelationship between economic and political phenomena and precipitated social unrest, doctrinal conflict in the postwar period has been waged, not between two fairly simple and specific points of view,

but between a large number of complex political-economic theories. Democracy in North America and in northwestern Europe is still conceived primarily in terms of politics and political rights; Socialism in general and Soviet Communism in particular renounce politics except as an incident of economics. In Fascist Italy a distinct point of view has emerged, and has been exported abroad, to assume an active role in the struggle for doctrinal supremacy.

Under the guidance of Benito Mussolini, Fascism has developed as a special theory of the state, and of the relationship of the state to its subjects. Fascism is as much a doctrinal system as "democracy," "socialism," "communism," "capitalism," or any other "ism," and Mussolini's relation to Fascism is that of Rousseau to the Social Contract, Adam Smith to capitalism, or Karl Marx to Socialism. As a complex mosaic of philosophical assumptions, Fascism defines the aims and sets the standards of judgment for the contemporary Italian State, and gives meaning to the term: *Fascist Italy*. To state it differently, the Fascist State may have been born at the hands of its skilled *accoucheur* Mussolini, may have acquired form and proportion in adolescent conflict with its rivals, may have attained maturity under the ministrations of the Fascist Party—but the qualities of its personality were and are derived from the *doctrine* of Fascism.

One who studies political institutions in Italy, Germany, the Soviet Union, and other authoritarian states is impressed by the extent to which they make use of identical governing mechanisms and political tactics. Yet, despite external similarities, each has a distinctive spirit, quality, or objective which sharply distinguishes it from its contemporary rivals. Doctrine gives to anti-capitalistic practices in the Soviet Union a significance quite different from that of anticapitalistic professions and practices in Italy. Similarly, the Fascism of Italy differs from the Fascism of Nazi Germany because of differences in the weight given to racial theories. Fascism, as a spiritual stimulant and ideology, engages in combat with its democratic and socialistic rivals with all the fervor, bitterness, and dogmatism of a religious war.

It is unnecessary to demonstrate whether the theoretical conceptions of Fascism existed in any definite form before the March on Rome. Mussolini has boasted that he had in mind "no specific doctrinal plan" when he organized the first *fascio* in

Milan in 1919.³ "If anyone cares to reread the now-crumpled sheets of those days . . . he will find not a doctrine, but a series of pointers, forecasts and hints which, when freed from the inevitable matrix of contingencies, were to develop in a few years time into a series of doctrinal positions entitling Fascism to rank as a political doctrine differing from all others, past and present." He has never ceased to insist that the doctrines of Fascism must shape and adapt themselves to conditions. This dynamic view is the foundation of the "permanent revolution" of Fascism, the revolution which must not be encumbered by its own paraphernalia if it is to hold its ground against forces of reaction and counterrevolution. It was in this sense that Mussolini wrote on August 27, 1921, to Michele Bianchi:

If Fascism does not wish to die, or worse still, commit suicide, it must now supply itself with a doctrine. Yet this shall not, and must not, be a robe of Nessus, clinging to us for all eternity, for tomorrow is something mysterious and unforeseen. . . .

I who have myself dictated this doctrine am the first to realize that the modest tables of our laws and program—the theoretical and practical guidance of Fascism—should be revised, corrected, enlarged, developed, because already in parts they have suffered injury at the hand of time. . . . To furnish the mind with doctrines and creeds does not mean to disarm, rather it means to strengthen, our power of action, and make us ever more conscious of our work. Soldiers who fight fully conscious of the cause make the best of warriors.⁴

The international appeal of Fascism, as well as its inconsistencies and contradictions, may be traced to its synthesis of political doctrines of many ages and types. Fascism runs the gamut from Plato to Marinetti. In constructing the positive aspect of the doctrine, Mussolini has been an ingenious and inventive editor, often working with materials supplied to him by his contemporaries, Giovanni Gentile, once Fascist Minister of Public Instruction;⁵ Alfredo Rocco, once Minister of Justice;⁶ and Sergio Panunzio, a professor of law in the University of Rome.⁷ In swaying a crowd with his oratory, Mussolini is an unabashed extrovert. Privately, he is something of an introspective recluse, who never ceases to amaze his enemies with his broad literary background, his conversant familiarity with many forms of intellectual activity, and his ability to make proper use

of the terminology of formal philosophy. But when otherwise pure doctrines pass through the bath of his pungent polemic, they have been warped into foundations of a philosophical system that could be only Mussolini's.

Thus, Aristotle with his phrase concerning man, "the political animal," postulated a conception of man shaped by politics as by bread and water. Plato, with his fine rationalization, conceived of government by a trained, political élite. Also unprotected by copyright were the doctrines of Machiavelli, upon whose treatise, *The Prince*, Mussolini once wrote a "dissertation,"^a the Machiavelli who emphasized the power and strength of the state, and who laid it down as a cardinal principle that the state created its own morality, unrestrained by any other. Already the steel framework of Fascism has been formed: political organization existing independently of human will, manned by those possessing political aptitude, and founded on an aggressive nationalistic policy. With these basic ingredients there have been blended Vico's criticism of the contract theory of the state, long a respected theoretical pillar of democracy; the pragmatism of William James; the categories of Vilfredo Pareto; the *élan vital* of Bergson; the neo-Hegelianism of Giovanni Gentile; the impressionistic "futurism" of F. T. Marinetti; and scraps from Justinian, Renan, Oriani, and even Karl Marx! The contradictions and inconsistencies of the resulting synthesis are an important part of it. It has, nevertheless, produced important guiding principles of Fascist morality.

—Fascism may be briefly described as the "cult of State worship," which visualizes the invisible State as ultimate reality and demands the sacrifice of all individual and group interests at its altar. Mussolini's summary speaks for itself: "The foundation of Fascist doctrine is the conception of the State,—of its essence, tasks and purposes. For Fascism, the State is the Absolute, in relation to which all individuals and groups are relative."^b This is the fundamental departure of Fascism from democracy and Socialism: from democracy, which emphasizes the rights of individuals against the state, viewed as a human institution, the servant of its citizens; from Socialism, which imposes a variety of functions upon the state during a period of transition, but which envisages the ultimate destruction of the state as the international-proletarian movement reaches its final stage.

Mussolini's remarks on Fascist doctrine, generally delivered for the Italian market, are usually so phrased that they impeach, by implication or otherwise, the democratic and socialistic conceptions. Into a single paragraph in his speech on the occasion of the First Quinquennale of the Regime, on March 10, 1929, Mussolini condensed the positive version of Fascism, its critical condemnation of other theories, and its *Weltanschauung*:

The Fascist State is not a night-watchman, solicitous only of the personal safety of its citizens; nor is it organized exclusively for the purpose of guaranteeing a certain degree of material prosperity and relatively peaceful conditions of life,—a board of directors would do as much. Neither is it exclusively political, divorced from practical realities and holding itself aloof from the multifarious activities of the citizens and the nation. *The State, as conceived and realized by Fascism, is a spiritual and ethical entity for securing the political, juridical, and economic organization of the nation, an organization which, in its origins and growth, is a manifestation of the spirit. . . . The State is not only the present, it is also the past and, above all, the future. Transcending the individual's brief spell of life, the State stands for the immanent conscience of the nation.* The forms in which it finds expression change, but the need for it remains. . . . Whenever respect for the State declines and the disintegrating and centrifugal tendencies of individuals and groups prevail, nations are headed for decay.¹⁰

Here is a salient challenge, a frontal attack upon democratic ideology. How can the invisible state, which cannot live without individuals, and which is created by and for humans, be described as an institution superior to the human will, an institution which is the present, past, and future? Obviously Mussolini's contention that the state is "a manifestation of the spirit" contains a germ of truth, for even democracies may experience the nationalistic, patriotic emotion. Fascists hold that even if the existence of the state cannot be proved by scientific test, the *idea* which it represents is real and vivid; the state lives because its subjects *feel* it; and the sentiment is a propelling motive of human action. Democrats disagree with the view that so emphasizes and magnifies the state; they must refuse to accept the immediate corollary—that citizens live to serve the state, that they owe it unquestioning allegiance and complete obligation, that they can claim no rights from it.

If democrats hold Fascism to be an artificial conception of the state, Fascists reciprocate in kind. Says Mussolini:

Fascism denies that numbers, as such, can be the determining factor in human society; it denies the right of numbers to govern by means of periodical consultations; it asserts the irremediable and fertile and beneficent inequality of men who cannot be levelled by any such mechanical and extrinsic device as universal suffrage. Democratic regimes may be described as those under which the people are, from time to time, deluded into the belief that they exercise sovereignty. . . . Democracy is a kingless regime infested by many kings. . . .

Democracies suspect that "the doctrine of our age is the Fascist," because of its "absurdities" and because "never before have the peoples thirsted for authority, direction, order, as they do now." This may be taken to mean that to Fascists their doctrine represents the basis for a return to "normalcy," after the turbulence of war years and the inevitable critical attitude toward the institutions which made it possible. Order and discipline among the rank and file of the populace are held as inherently desirable and good; and Fascism attracts attention abroad for the simple reason that in every society, democratic or not, there is a large element in the population which instinctively distrusts and fears popular ferment and critical agnosticism. But true democracy lives and progresses only because out of the ferment comes a new orientation and direction; democratic tolerance of ferment is the steam boiler's tolerance of its safety valve. Fascists deny the principle; by abolishing liberties of expression, they deny the means: authority replaces liberty. Whose authority save that of a self-appointed, self-perpetuating dictator? Every authoritarian state of the past has exploded because it ripped out its own safety valve, placing its trust in rigidity of structure.

In his famous address at Perugia in 1925, Alfredo Rocco touched upon many of the Fascist criticisms of democracy.¹¹ His diatribe against the unhistorical "social contract" theory of the state disturbed few democrats, who have long since ceased to justify democratic institutions on the basis of that fanciful hypothesis; his sarcastic description of democratic theory as "atomistic," similarly, could not be rebutted so long as the assertion of state supremacy was not opened to question. Not so easily dismissed, however, was Rocco's criticism of democracy, echoed by Mussolini in later years, on the basis of its seeming inability

to come to grips with economic problems. Must political independence yield with economic independence as *laissez faire* has given way to supercapitalistic monopoly? Democracy was born in the day of economic liberalism, when the state sought only to impose a negative restraint upon the unsocial attitudes of an unlawful minority. While it is true that many democrats in the time of Thomas Jefferson accepted the maxim, "That government is best which governs least," modern democracies have been able to bridge the gap, as the policies of Blum and Roosevelt clearly prove. To Mussolini, however, the bridge is not a substantial one, since it is erected upon the fundamentally fallacious belief that the sole concern of the state, in the regulation of economic affairs, is to provide a material service to its citizens. Fascists are more concerned with the materialistic tendencies of Socialism than with the materialistic tendencies of democracies, but Mussolini's rebuttal attacks both: "Fascism denies the materialistic conception of happiness as a possibility, and abandons it to the economists of the mid-eighteenth century. This means that Fascism denies the equation: well-being = happiness, which sees in men mere animals, content when they can feed and fatten, thus reducing them to a vegetative existence pure and simple." In the face of such an assertion there is no room for argument. The breach, the struggle between Fascism and democracy, necessarily becomes final and irreconcilable.

The nature of the state and its function, however, does not exhaust the categories of political theory. What of *forms* of government? What has Fascist doctrine to say concerning the perpetuation of the regime? Having come to power in 1922 during a time of stress, Mussolini is content to pose as the savior of the nation, as the man who, with the aid of other patriots, felt the need of saving the nation from itself and acted accordingly. Having power, there is no need to justify its possession; like all other dictatorships, the Fascist State is a "police state," resting upon the authority of force. Mussolini would identify the strength of the state with the strength of its governing clique. The democratic basis of authority, in the form of "electionism," finds no sympathy in Italy; the monarchic basis of authority, solving the problem on the basis of heredity, is no reliance for a regime which is willing to use the monarchy as a convenient instrument for its ends. Nothing is left but the dictatorship of a

regime. The simple fact is that while various legislative enactments, particularly those concerning the Fascist Grand Council, have provided for the perpetuation of the regime, the basis of authority is force, and the regime for the future is as secure as the force underlying it. Mussolini, it is well known, ridicules pacifism in any form; force is identified with virility and life, war becomes a virtue. Fascist theory is not concerned with succession to Mussolini, except as it sets up the assumption that no properly patriotic Italian could wish for any other than the Fascist solution.

The extreme consciousness of the state which characterizes Fascist thought was fixed by the anarchic street fighting of 1919-1922; this same struggle fixed the conception of national unity more firmly. In Italian politics, however, nationalism is by no means a new note: Dante, Machiavelli, Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Cavour were eminent names long before Mussolini. What Fascists have done has been to give Italy a new sense of nationalism, based on old and respected foundations. The propagandist appeal of patriotic megalomaniacs gives polish to the Fascist theory, renders it more palatable for the man in the street. Dr. Florinsky has expressed doubts¹² concerning the extent to which the average Italian actually *believes* in Fascism. But the point is largely irrelevant, since Italians, believing or not, respond.

Fascist doctrine has had distinct repercussions in Italian politics. The totalitarian state was formally proclaimed at La Scala on October 28, 1925, in Mussolini's formula: "Everything within the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State." Government in Fascist Italy, accordingly, is more than a law-making instrumentality, more than a device for maintaining internal order and reconciling private differences. The State enters with full vigor into the control and domination of every form and phase of human and social activity, holding with firm grip the destinies of its subjects: encouraging their conception and facilitating their birth, cultivating their outlook, supervising family and economic life, defining universal lines of moral action and of public and private conduct. Seldom have Fascists departed from this conception of the Absolute State, the state which is not foreign to anything within its domain. As the following examples will illustrate, most of the essential practices of the regime find their justification in the theory of the state:

1. The elimination of political parties reflects the belief that political authority must not be divided from within by political dissension or by the tactics of rival politicians. Fascists characteristically identify the State with its governing institutions; what weakens the latter also weakens the State.

2. The reorganization of local and provincial government has witnessed the application of this principle on a territorial basis. Greater authority and control center in Rome; territorial reorganization, with elimination of local elected agencies, is intended to produce a perfectly symmetrical administrative system, with power and responsibility definitely strengthened. *Hierarchy*, a basic Fascist principle, finds one of its best expressions in this field.

3. The principle that the totalitarian state must master all internal forces finds particular application in the economic sphere. Bitterly condemning the *laissez-faire* system as one which enables employers and employees to engage without restraint in the struggle for control of the state economic machine as a unit, Fascists have set up the cumbersome machinery of the corporative state with the avowed purpose of controlling and directing all economic activities. In accordance with the suggestion of the Commission on Constitutional Reform (1925), this problem has been solved within the framework of "public," *i.e.*, constitutional, law; the entire corporative system is regarded as an essential and constitutional aspect of the government system.

4. Fascist theory explains military, foreign, and colonial policies. The typical reasoning is that the strength of states is relative, is determined by the strength of other states. The shift in state strength, relatively, is a dynamic one; the state which rests on its laurels, which ceases its relentless quest for more power, is doomed to extinction or decay. Hence in Fascist Italy the constant pursuit of power and prestige for the State leads to an increasing military establishment, an aggressive nationalistic foreign policy, a disregard for inconvenient international obligations, international and colonial war.

5. The Fascist Party, as an institution of the State, derives its place from basic theory: the Party is the élite, the vanguard of the politically intelligent and able, the corps of men best able to serve as the unifying spinal cord of the State, as its concrete cohesive force. The Party elaborates doctrine, maintains prop-

aganda, vigilantly supervises all social and political activities—all to the end that unrest may not impair the effectiveness of public authority, to the end that there may be unquestioned and immediate enforcement and observance of the instructions which descend, again along the hierarchy, from the top.¹³

6. A distinctive theory of law has also emerged. Law is the vehicle of the State, which knows no law or obligation apart from itself. Codes of public and private law have been remodeled on new lines; new tribunals have been instituted, of a political and economic nature; and the interpretation and application of the law are always colored, as in other dictatorships, not by conceptions of abstract justice, but by the considerations and requirements of high policy.

* * *

As thus defined, the issue is clear. Unlimited legal reserves of power are exercised by legally unrestrained public officers. There can be no pretense that power is lacking, no evasion of responsibility. Upon the *Duce* and Fascist authorities rests a final accountability for the wise and judicious exercise of power. What is to prevent the utter and reckless abuse of authority, the unwise ordering of the public system, the ill-considered definition of public policy? Some answers to these queries may be found in an examination of the more subtle restraints of a moral and political character which the regime cannot escape.

In the first place, Fascist writers have recently begun to speak of the "true democracy" of Fascism. This singles from the Lincolnian trilogy the phrase: "*for the people*," and gives the State paternal responsibilities. Mussolini prefers government by plebiscite rather than by election, and, even though there is no fear of losing an election or plebiscite, the regime is anxious to obtain substantial unanimity of popular support. For the most part, Italian public sentiment is artificially stimulated; but there remain a number of sectors of action in which the government still sends up "trial balloons" to test public opinion.

Mussolini's much quoted boast, "Fascist social legislation is the most advanced in the world," is unquestionably a convenient propagandistic exaggeration, yet it contains a kernel of truth. Despite the condemnation of private rights, despite the rejection of class interests, despite the insistence that the State has no

concern with providing material benefits for the present generation—despite all the fundamental theories of Fascism, Fascist leaders realize that the permanence of their regime depends, in the last analysis, upon its constructive achievements and upon its success in preventing social unrest. For this reason, the regime maintains an elaborate system of social insurance, health resorts for young and old, a program of slum clearance, and a large-scale program of public works to allay unemployment. The mass of the population does not object to puritanical, nonmaterialistic professions so long as it is not adversely affected. Statistical comparisons between the old and the new dispensation are notoriously unreliable, but the foreign observer on the scene in Italy cannot reach the conclusion that the Italian standard of living has declined under Fascism. The jovial laxity of morals has been restrained, and the inner jubilation of spirit which has been characteristically Italian may not be so much in evidence, but these things are apart from material standards of living.

A peculiar psychology has been at work among Fascist officials. Their position in the Party is that of a separate estate, rapidly growing more independent of the economic interests which earlier financed them. In the course of time—and the experience of many American machine politicians has not been vastly different—the slogans and programs of the movement have been taken seriously, and particularly among the younger members of the Party there is a definite desire to establish a personal reputation by performing a public service. The spiritual appeal of Fascism exercises an appreciable influence among a people indoctrinated in the principles of the Catholic Church, and it is worth noting that Fascism, generally, has taken hold only in the European countries where Catholic sentiment prevails. Even in Germany/ the Nazi movement had its origins in Catholic South Germany and Hitler, like Mussolini, Schuschnigg, Franco, Degrelle, and Ridz-Smigly, was a Catholic. To communicants of the Catholic Church, the spirit of Fascist doctrine, discipline, and hierarchy has a tangible and real meaning not so readily perceived by other peoples. Despite an occasional recrimination when the Fascist youth organizations begin to infringe upon papal territory, the church lends support to the regime, to its ambitions in Spain, to its adventure in Ethiopia, and, in general, to its leadership in the

struggle against antireligious Marxism. Faith in Fascism has become more than a political obligation for many Italians.

It is also to be remembered that Fascism is a *popular* movement, in the European sense of a movement of the middle and lower classes, whose leaders make no pretense to being of the aristocracy. Mussolini is, himself, a typical example of this. The Fascist regime distrusts the blue bloods—only a handful of the Fascist faithful have been ennobled—and finds that distrust reciprocated. Many present Fascists were former Socialists, dissatisfied with Socialist inaction. Inevitably some of this kinship with the masses has filtered through into Fascist public policy. The Fascist bureaucracy is related to a vast number of citizens. And many Italians feel an honest pride in their fellow proletarians who have risen to the political top and “made good.” This is a strange paradox which does much to explain why the average Italian who goes about his affairs without undue curiosity seldom encounters the police.

Finally, the Italians as a people are gifted with a sense of proportion, which is simply another way of saying, a sense of humor. They still poke private fun at bureaucrats and tax collectors, retail jokes about the foibles and fancies of administrators, and keep a discreet tongue in cheek when occasion requires. They indulge in the luxury of *domani* as Spaniards do in *mañana*, and often marvel admiringly at the activity, energy, and enthusiasm of their Fascist rulers. Most of them feel a sense of pride in leaders who are seeking to restore Italian prestige, even though they may ask, “What’s the use?” This same sense of proportion gives Fascist leaders a sense of expediency and opportunism. The regime not infrequently alters its policies, postpones action as the inadvisability of a course of action becomes apparent. There are more “dead-letter” laws on the books than Fascists would like to admit.

However, such practical restraints as these have thus far operated in the realm of small things. On substantial and large questions of public policy, such as economic autarchy, imperial and colonial policy, war and peace, no appreciable change has taken place since 1922. Quantitatively, these large questions of policy are the most vital and important, and have yet to be placed to the definitive test. The future success of the Fascist regime will depend entirely on its ability to analyze its problems

of large scope and change its tactics before the decisive self-imposed delusions of the regime prove entirely false and impossible and, with the proof, destroy the regime and bring probable ruin to the nation.

NOTES

1. J. Strachey, *The Nature of the Capitalist Crisis*, p. 362, New York, 1935.
- ② H. R. Spencer, "The Mussolini Regime," in G. S. Ford (ed.), *Dictatorship in the Modern World*, p. 102, Minneapolis, 1935.
3. B. Mussolini, "Fascismo," in *Enciclopedia italiana*, vol. 14, 1932. Authorized English translation in Mussolini, *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions*, Rome, 1935; another translation appears in *International Conciliation*, no. 306, 1935.
4. Mussolini, *Messaggi e proclami*, p. 39, Milan, 1929, translated in Mussolini, *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions*, p. 34.
5. Gentile, *Origini e dottrina del fascismo*, Rome, 1929.
6. Rocco, *La trasformazione dello stato*, Rome, 1927; "The Political Doctrine of Fascism," *International Conciliation*, no. 223, 1926.
7. Panunzio, *Il sentimento dello stato*, Rome, 1929; *Rivoluzione e costituzione*, Milan, 1933.
8. "Preludio al 'Principe,'" *Gerarchia*, vol. 3, 1924; cf. W. K. Stewart, "The Mentors of Mussolini," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 22, pp. 843-869, 1928.
- ⑨ Mussolini, *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions*, p. 27.
- 10 See H. Finer, *Mussolini's Italy*, New York, 1935, for a critical examination of Mussolini's political and social doctrine, in which the address of 1929 was requested.
11. "The Political Doctrine of Fascism," cited.
12. *Fascism and National Socialism*, pp. 77 ff., New York, 1936.
13. Cf. also A. J. Zurcher, "State Propaganda in Italy," in H. L. Childs (ed.), *Propaganda and Dictatorship*, pp. 35 ff., Princeton, 1936.

Chapter IV

THE FASCIST PARTY

1. THE CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF THE PARTY

Government in Fascist Italy derives its distinctive quality from four basic elements. First of these is *Il Duce*—Mussolini—the “man of the hour,” who as founder of the Fascist State has left his indelible mark; second is the doctrine of Fascism, the political ideology of the revolution, an element of the mind far more viable than the personality of its original protagonist; third is the corporative state, the mechanism of economic control and management which seeks to impress upon the citizen a consciousness of the regime in the field of production; and finally, there is the Partito Nazionale Fascista, the political organization which captured power, and the mechanism which today gives force to the orders of its leader, meaning to the theoretical conceptions of Fascism, and direction to the corporate state. The multiplicity of functions performed by the Party is reflected in the unique position which it holds in the system of public law and administration. Even more significant is the contribution which it makes to the “institutionalization” of the regime, guarantor of its continuity and permanence. It is Axiom Number One of practical politics that a powerful political machine can be displaced or defeated only by a more powerful machine, unless it collapses through its sheer rottenness. So long as the Fascist Party retains its monopoly and its vitality, the permanence of the Fascist revolution is protected from internal forces.

The first article in its *Statuto*, or constitution, defines the Fascist Party as “a civil militia, at the orders of the Duce, in the service of the Fascist State.” This seemingly optimistic rhetoric is, if anything, an understatement of the fact. Far from serving the State in an abject and humble sense, the Party claims credit for having brought the *Fascist State* to life, and uses the instrumentalities of the State to attain its own objectives. It is to

the Party that the State looks for the motivating source of its power, the organization which supplies its personnel and political talent, which is variously described as the "spinal cord," "cable conduit," "brain," and "engine" of the State. This is to say that without the Party, the Fascist State could not exist; without the Party, the institutions of the State would function quite differently. As the formal institutions of the State are adapted and used by the Party for its own purposes they lose relative importance and come, finally, to occupy a secondary place in the Italian system. The study of Italian government today begins with an analysis of the function of the Fascist Party, rather than with an inquiry into the meaningless and formal constitutional machinery of the State.

What is the Fascist Party? Agreement may be more readily reached on the negative aspect of the question; "What is the Fascist Party *not*?" Mussolini and his constitutional lawyers agree that the Fascist Party began in 1919 as a vaguely defined "movement" aiming to eliminate from Italian society and politics those "subversive" forces which threatened the unity and security of the nation. While the pacifism of international Marxism was foremost among the antipathies of Fascism, equal contempt was expressed for the system of democratic parliamentary government, conducted on party lines, that made it possible for Marxism to establish its roots in Italy. Fascists have always stressed the centrifugal effects of the multiparty system and declared, from the beginning, their intention to abolish parties. Efforts in that direction were conducted for more than two years by a loosely integrated collection of local *fasci*. By its resolution of November 8, 1921, the Third National Congress of *Fasci di Combattimento* decided to transform the Fascist movement into the Fascist Party. Fascist writers use the phrase, "From movement to party," to describe the adoption by the movement of the forms of a political party while not losing sight of its ultimate antiparty objectives.¹ In 1925, after all opposition parties had been abolished by administrative action and political pressures, the Fascist Party remained alone in the arena—confronted by no organized opposition and by no rival parties seeking to share ministries in a parliamentary government, and functioning under no restraints but those imposed by its own discretion and judgment.

A political party is normally regarded as an association of individuals who share certain basic prejudices, antipathies, or points of view and who seek, by their organization, to compete with other parties for the control of public office. Such a party draws its strength, character, and functions from the very existence of other parties. Having ended the party regime in Italy, the Fascist Party sponsors a new conception of the role of party. Having power, it no longer organizes to *seek* it; having abolished other political associations, it no longer organizes to *retain* power in the face of organized opposition; having a legal monopoly of the public office, it does not share its political responsibilities and powers with other parties; having a monopoly of doctrine, it no longer has to fight others; in a word, having captured the State it proceeds only to train and direct it. Even anti-Fascists will agree that theirs is not a party in any traditional sense; Fascists are careful to point out that the word "party" is simply one of the residues of democratic-liberal terminology.² The Fascist "Party" differs from democratic parties in its (1) organization (hierarchical), (2) membership policy (closed and exclusive), (3) political tactics (unconditioned by rival parties), and (4) function (monopolistic direction of the State and definition of public policy). Thus, the Fascist Party is not to be regarded as a political party; it is actually an organ of the State.

Incorporation of the Fascist Party

This last conclusion, implying the incorporation of the Party into the State, does not rest as does the position of the Nazi Party in Germany, on the basis of any specific enactment. The movement in the direction of incorporation, which developed by means of piecemeal legislation, reached its culmination when the royal decree-law of January 11, 1937,³ conferred upon the Secretary of the Party, in addition to his other capacities, the title and functions of a minister, Secretary of State. An explanation of the relationships between the Party and the State becomes, in reality, an analysis of the most distinctive aspect of Fascist public law. The more significant relationships may be summarily stated:

(1. Pronouncements of high authorities define the Party as an organ of the State from the political point of view. Mussolini,

in his speech of September 14, 1929,⁴ replied, to those who suggested that the Party be dissolved, that it was, in fact, the "capillary organization of the Regime," that its "importance was fundamental," and that, had no such organization existed, he would have created it "as the *Partito Nazionale Fascista* now is—numerous, disciplined, ardent, with a rigid, hierarchical structure." He announced that the problem was not that of abolishing the Party, but of "situating" it more precisely within the framework of the State, to the end that all "dualism" between the Party and the State might be extinguished. From these declarations, two results immediately followed: (a) on December 14, 1929, a law on the reorganization of the Fascist Grand Council was adopted, and (b) on December 20, 1929, the first "official" statute of the Party was proclaimed. The law on the Grand Council was reported from committee to the chamber by Ermanno Amicucci, who announced: "The Party has thus completely become an organ of the State. . . . The project of law perfects the incorporation of the Party into the State."⁵

(2.) As a de facto political association, the Fascist Party was governed, as were the other parties, by its own rules and regulations. Its first statute of 1921 had been adopted by the National Directory, while its second statute had been adopted in 1926 by the Grand Council. Provision was made in the law on the Grand Council of 1929 for the promulgation of future Party statutes by royal decree, following the deliberation of the Grand Council and the Council of Ministers. Accordingly, the statute of 1929 and the present statute, dated November 17, 1932,⁶ were contained in acts of positive legislation. The Party thereupon ceased to be a private, de facto association.

(3.) Although no single enactment has ever incorporated the Party, as a whole, into the State, a number of specific acts have given to organs of the Party definite functions in the legal-constitutional system. (a) *Il Duce* has had his leadership of the Party sanctioned by law and is no longer simply an extralegal officer. In fact, Mussolini as *Duce* has an official responsibility for advising the king upon the appointment of the Secretary of the Party, an act accomplished by royal decree. Mussolini therefore has two public capacities—as *Duce* and as *Head of the Government*. (b) The Fascist Grand Council must be

consulted in advance of the enactment of legislation of a constitutional character; it prepares the national list upon which elections to the Chamber of Deputies took place under the electoral law of 1928, a function which was tantamount to the appointment of the Chamber of Deputies; and it is to the Grand Council that the king must look for advice as to a successor in the event that the office of the Head of the Government is vacated. (c) The Secretary of the Party is, under the decree-law of 1937, a member of the Council of Ministers; and, as a minister, he occupies the Government Bench in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. (d) Genuine powers of substantive legislation were devolved upon the Party under the royal decree-law of October 5, 1936,⁷ which gave to the central price committee of the Party and to the provincial intersyndical committees the authority to establish the wholesale and retail prices for commodities sold (and services rendered) in the Italian market. In a more indirect way, the Labor Charter, adopted by the Fascist Grand Council on April 21, 1927, was given legal effect by a statute of December 13, 1928,⁸ which authorized the issuance of decrees for its enforcement.

(4.) The Party has also been given an official voice in the functioning of various State organs. (a) The most important administrative agency in the provinces, the *giunta*, includes among its nine members four designated by the Secretary of the Party. (b) The council of each of the twenty-two category corporations created in 1934 includes three representatives from the Party, one of whom is the vice-chairman of the council. (c) A Party representative participates in the work of the Central Commission for Local Finance. (d) The Secretary of the Party is a member, ex officio, of such high-placed organs of the State as the Supreme Defense Council, the Council on Higher Education, and the Corporative Central Committee. The representation of the Party, wherever it occurs, is presumed to take the leadership in deliberations, and to insure that the decisions adopted by the organs in which it participates will be in accordance with the policies and instructions of the Party high command.

(5.) Reciprocally, representatives from other organs of the State participate in the work of Party institutions: the Fascist Grand Council includes the ministers and heads of other State

organs, and the National Directory of the Party includes representatives of the Ministries of the Interior and Corporations.

6. Italian courts, particularly those concerned with the interpretation of administrative law in its application to public officers, have taken judicial cognizance of the position of the Party. In one of its most important decisions, in the Maddalena Case decided May 20, 1932, the Court of Cassation held that a Federal (provincial) Secretary of the Party was a "public officer," and not merely an official of a political party. The language which it used is instructive:

The *Partito Nazionale Fascista* is not a "party" in the sense which is traditionally assigned to the word "party." In other words, it is not an aggregate which professes the same political opinions, working within the State and sometimes against the State, as happened before October, 1922. . . . The *Partito Nazionale Fascista* is to be regarded as an organ of public law, and its hierarchy, whether collegial, central, or peripheral, as invested with public functions and thus as public officers, even when, as in the present case, they are exercising disciplinary functions over persons inscribed in the Party.

Political pronouncements, acts of legislation, and judicial opinions thus concur in ascribing to the Party a special and unique place in the legal and constitutional structure of the State. Its actions are no longer regarded simply as those of an extralegal and unofficial "party" organization. The Fascist Party is the drop of black ink which, deposited in the clear water that was formerly the Italian State, has entirely altered the aspect of the original. For this reason, the Fascist State is more than the form which the Italian State has assumed under Fascist auspices: it is the State into which the Fascist Party has been merged as an integral element, the State which is lead, pushed, and pulled as the Party wills.

Range of Party Activity

Every conceivable sphere of the social and political life of contemporary Italy has been affected by the action of the Fascist Party. In the field of education, the Party maintains its own propaganda, and its youth organizations, known collectively as the *Balilla*, are administered by Party representatives working with the Ministry of National Education. Press and propaganda are generally controlled by the Ministry of Popular

Culture, but actual leadership is supplied by the Press Office of the Fascist Party. In the military sphere, the Voluntary Militia of National Security (M. V. S. N.) represents the modern form of the early Fascist militia; the M. V. S. N. is one of the official branches of the armed services of the State, is open only to Party members, and all able-bodied Party members under fifty-five are required to enroll in its ranks. This was the Black Shirt army which participated side by side with the regular army in Ethiopia, and which was reported as participating in the Spanish campaign of 1936-1937. It is the Fascist Party which binds the corporative state into a coherent economic organization, which defines economic policy, assists in the enforcement of economic regulations, establishes prices, and takes the responsibility for the form and content of the vital collective labor contracts. In the field of public administration, the Party supplies the State personnel: since December, 1932, inscription in the Party has been the indispensable condition which must be satisfied before competitive examinations for the public service may be taken. In the broader realm of social affairs, the Party not only coordinates non-Party activities, but also supports its own charitable, welfare, and insurance program. The leisure-time organization for Italian workers, the *Dopolavoro*, is a Party institution; the entire athletic activity of the nation is controlled through the Italian Olympic Committee, a Party organ, of which the Party Secretary is the president. Homes and institutions for mothers and orphans, and winter and summer resorts for children, are maintained under Party auspices. These and other activities of the regime, to be properly appreciated and understood, must be seen through the smoked glasses of the Party.

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY

A. Early Development

"Fascism does not have long statutes or complicated rules." This was an early boast of Fascist organizers as they sought, in the days of 1920-1921, to coordinate the major activities of the hundreds of *fasci* which had sprouted in northern and central Italy. In its formative years, the Fascist movement was characterized by a large degree of independence for local

organizations and, consequently, by few organs of central direction. The movement was not only decentralized, but to a large extent was based upon democratic lines. The leader of a local *fascio*, which had been founded by a semiprofessional organizer sent out from Milan, owed his leadership and position to qualities of personality and not to appointment from a hierarchical superior; whatever authority he possessed locally resulted from the personal bond of allegiance that had been established between himself and his followers. When, from time to time, it became necessary to send representatives to regional meetings, or to sessions of the rudimentary central organs, these were designated by the members of the local *fascio*. National congresses were held annually as a rule in such key cities as Milan, Florence, Rome, and Naples—to hear Mussolini's speeches and to elect members of a central coordinating committee. Decentralization and democracy, cardinal sins in contemporary Italy, were highly effective means of attracting new fasci into the movement, of maintaining friendly relations with strong local chieftains, or *ras*, and of building up the elements of collective allegiance. These considerations colored the first Party statute of November, 1921.

Once, however, the March on Rome had been completed, the inexorable influence of "hierarchy" began to make itself felt. Mussolini's review, *Gerarchia*, founded early in 1922, signaled the beginning of transition. As early as January 12, 1923, the leading political and military figures of the movement were summoned to meet with Mussolini in his suite in the Grand Hotel in Rome, as the Grand Council of Fascism. After proceeding to transform the Fascist squads into the official Voluntary Militia of National Security, the Grand Council adopted a resolution dealing with the organization of the political and administrative secretariats of the Party, thus assuming the constituent authority of the Party. In October, a provisional National Directory was set up to maintain the central organization, pending an assembly of the provincial secretaries as a "National Council," an organ which then held great prestige and authority. But as Mussolini and the Grand Council continued to adopt measures concerning Party organization, the authority of the central administration steadily increased at the expense of Party regionalism. Finally, following the

fourth congress of the Party, the Grand Council adopted the new statute of October 8, 1926, which formally instituted the Party hierarchy. Shortly thereafter, the remains of decentralized Party democracy entirely disappeared. The Party congress gave way to the unofficial *Gran Rapporto*, or general assembly of Party dignitaries who bore appointment from *Il Duce*; but in 1929 even the fiction of a representative basis in this assembly was dropped. Thus, there is found in the Fascist Party no organ through which the rank and file, as such, can make its views known to the high command, or through which it can pretend to exercise general control.

Subsequent statutes of the Party, in 1929 and 1932, were given effect by royal decree instead of by direct Grand Council action. The last of the statutes made but few alterations in the organizational scheme prescribed in 1929, since which time the principles of Party structure have remained substantially unimpaired.

B. Membership Policy

The political party in the one-party, totalitarian State is characteristically a closed organization, confined to a selected, dues-paying, semiprofessional membership. This principle, steadily applied in the Communist Party, did not prevail at first in Italy, when Mussolini was of opinion that the Party should include all good and loyal Italians. As the rewards of Party membership, in terms of political and economic preferment, became apparent, the Party was swamped by membership applications from lukewarm citizens anxious to participate in the spoils. In consequence, the doors to the Party were closed in 1927 to all but "graduates" of the youth organization, then the *Avanguardia*, who became full members at the age of eighteen. In 1930, the Young Fascist organization (*Fasci Giovanili di Combattimento*) was formed to receive, at the age of eighteen, recruits from the *Avanguardia*. After surviving what is practically a three-year probationary period, Young Fascists acquire senior status at the age of twenty-one, on the occasion of the annual Fascist Levy. The Levy, which now occurs on May 24, is conducted by the Secretary of the Party, acting with the Under-secretary of State for National Education (President of the *Balilla*) and the Chief of the General Staff of the M. V. S. N.

Although the door has theoretically been closed since 1927, the barriers are occasionally relaxed. In 1932, for example, several hundred thousand applications were accepted as a feature of the celebration of the Fascist Decennial; again, in 1936, applications from deserving participants in the Ethiopian campaign were accepted. The Party never closes its eyes to individual and group applicants who evidence their good will by making financial contributions of appropriate size to the Party coffers. In the five-year period, 1931–1936, the membership of the *Fasci di Combattimento* increased 139 per cent—from 825,754 members on December 7, 1931, to 1,975,714 on October 29, 1935. In relation to a population of more than forty million the Party membership appears to be highly restricted. In fact, however, there was one Party member for every 12.5 registered voters in 1931, and one member for every 5.5 voters in 1935. Since this approaches the saturation point for an organization which claims to be highly selective, the barriers were raised in 1935–1936, when only 51,686 new members were admitted (as compared with 123,937 in 1934–1935, and 436,370 in 1933–1934). It is too early to gauge the effect of the subsequent dropping of the barriers in the interests of the Ethiopian campaigners.

Once admitted into the Party, however, not all members stand on the same footing. Those few surviving members who date from the original meeting in Piazza San Sepolcro constitute a special aristocracy in the Party ranks and take precedence. Those members who participated in the work before the March on Rome enjoy privileges: if injured “for the Cause” they are entitled to the financial compensation given to the injured war veterans; the surviving widows of members killed in action for the same reason receive the equivalent of war pensions; while other early pre-March members employed in industrial and other enterprises receive a special bonus, in addition to their regular compensation as fixed in the collective labor contracts, which is measured by the number of months of registration in the Party before October 28, 1922. In the third place, the members who have entered the Party since that date by recruitment from youth organizations are entitled to the nonfiscal privileges of the older members of early date. Finally, those individuals who have been admitted since 1922, as adults, stand outside the pale of the Party bureaucracy: responsible positions in the Party

service may not be held by them.¹⁰ This is intended to safeguard the Party from the admission of new members whose only purpose in joining is to derive personal profit from direct Party work.

Possession of membership qualifications is not demonstrated by any formal period of probation, except that served by young recruits during their three years in the Young Fascist organization. A member of the Party is strictly held to the observance of disciplinary regulations, particularly those arising from his oath, taken at the time of admission: "In the name of God and Italy, I swear that I will enforce the orders of the Duce, and will serve with all my strength and, if necessary, with my blood, the Cause of the Fascist Revolution."¹¹ As a Party member, he is expected to be a model of exemplary behavior for his community. "If he fails in his duty, by violations of discipline or by deficiency in the qualities which constitute the traditional Fascist spirit," he is subject to various penalties, ranging from mere reprimand to expulsion. The major penalty, expulsion, carries with it exclusion from all forms of public activity and is reserved for "traitors" to the Party and for those of its members convicted by regular courts of infamous crimes. A person once excluded may be readmitted only when *Il Duce* has given his personal approval, upon the basis of new evidence. Evidence of a member's status is supplied by his tessera, or membership card, reissued annually on October 29 and bearing full particulars concerning his record; this, together with his distintivo, the badge which he wears in his lapel, may be withdrawn. "Withdrawal of the tessera" is second in severity only to expulsion, and has many of its practical effects, except for the treacherous implication. Suspension of a member for an unlimited period of time is regarded as of less weight; apart from Party reasons, a member may be suspended immediately after criminal charges have been filed against him and pending his trial in the courts. The Party penal scheme is completed with the definitive suspension, for a period of from one to twelve months, and, finally, with the reprimand. These penalties are imposed by the Federal and National Secretaries of the Party upon the advice of the provincial and national courts of Party discipline, according to procedures defined in the Party statute and fixed by precedent.

The Party hymn, *Giovinezza*, a stirring air, reflected the enthusiasm of young members in the early years of the movement. The maturity which has come to Fascism in its second generation is matched by the graying hair and enlarging figures of those who originated it. Revolutionary zeal has given way, as swash-buckling and fiery youngsters have aged, to a search for order and some tranquillity. Mussolini and the elders are frequently jolted to an awareness of the fact that to many younger members the glories of a revolutionary past are becoming dim tradition. As they turn their eyes from vague remembrance of a glorious past to the problematical future, the younger members pose new issues and questions which the leaders have yet to face frankly.

C. The Party Hierarchy

Il Duce, as leader of the Party, holds no position in the formal hierarchy and organization of the Party. The manner of his election or appointment has never been defined. Although the Party statute of 1929 listed him first among the hierarchs, the statute of 1932 deliberately removed him from, and placed him above, the hierarchy. For this reason, the principles which govern the rank and file of the membership and hierarchy have no meaning for him. Accordingly, it may be said that the Party recognizes three estates: first is *Il Duce*, standing on a superior level, not within the organization, but its director and leader accountable to no one; in the second place is the Party hierarchy, consisting of those responsible for insuring enforcement of his directions through their several offices; and finally, the rank and file of the membership completes the picture, the rank and file whose exclusive Party privilege is that of obeying principles prescribed by *Il Duce* and more precise instructions laid down by the hierarchy. Thus the hierarchy occupies the strategic central situation and has functions and privileges accordingly.

The Party statute recognizes *five hierarchial levels*, based on the broad stratum of local officialdom and building to a one-man apex—the Party Secretary. The Secretary, appointed by royal decree on proposal of *Il Duce*, is his direct representative in supervising and maintaining the Party offices, services, and functions. He is also accountable to the Fascist Grand Council, of which he is the secretary. This line of responsibility is

expressed in Article 7 of the Statute: "The Secretary of the P. N. F., on the basis of the directions of the Fascist Grand Council, . . . the supreme body emerging from the Revolution, which coordinates and integrates all of the activities of the Regime, issues regulations for the work to be undertaken by the dependent organs, reserving over them the most complete control." Incidentally, the members of the Grand Council as members of a constitutional organ of the State, have no formal status as Party hierarchs; they, too, are above the Party.

Under various titles, the Party has had six secretaries since its foundation. The first was Michele Bianchi, one of the Quadrumvirs of the March on Rome, who was replaced in 1923 by Francesco Giunta. The tempermental Roberto Farinacci held the office for slightly more than a year before he was compelled to resign on March 30, 1926. Augusto Turati served as Secretary during nearly five years of the critical transition period; he was the first Secretary to have his appointment confirmed by royal decree, but following a notorious clash with Mussolini, he was exiled in disgrace in October, 1930. For a short while thereafter, Giovanni Giuriati served concurrently as Secretary and as President of the Chamber of Deputies, until replaced by the present Secretary, Achille Starace, in December, 1931. Starace, a charter member of the Milan *fascio*, has held the position longer than any other Secretary, and has become something of a fixture. He rose from relative obscurity on the basis of exemplary discipline and obedience, but has exhibited organizational talent of the first order: during his administration, the corporative system took tangible form and the Party embarked upon the difficult technical task of supervising economic practices and establishing price levels. His is the name most frequently heard in Italy after Mussolini's; his general popularity was accentuated by his leadership of the Gondar-Lake Tsana column during the Ethiopian war. Any prospective claimant to Mussolini's position must first override Starace's claims. That he has lasted for six years, however, indicates that Mussolini does not yet fear that he has created a personal machine, as did Stalin under Lenin. At any time there may be a "change of guard," and rumors have been current for nearly a year that Starace is destined to become an imperial proconsul, possibly replacing Italo Balbo as Governor General of Libya.

The second level in the hierarchy is occupied by the members of the National Directory. This is a council of eleven members, appointed by *Il Duce* on the proposal of the Secretary, and removable at any time: three vice-secretaries, the administrative secretary, and seven regular members are included.¹² The directory meets, as a rule, every month under the chairmanship of *Il Duce* or the Secretary, to advise the higher authorities and to serve as an agency of Party legislation. When *Il Duce* presides, its membership includes the Ministers of the Interior and Corporations and the Commandant General of the M. V. S. N.; when the Secretary takes the chair, the Undersecretaries of State for Interior and Corporations and the Chief of the General Staff of the M. V. S. N. participate.

Until December, 1936, a single vice-secretary assisted the Secretary and substituted in the event of his absence. Today there are three vice-secretaries, no longer ex officio members of the Grand Council:¹³ Adelchi Serena was continued in office, while the new appointees were Vincenzo Zangara, author of an authoritative treatise on the Party,¹⁴ and Dino Gardini, who, as chairman of the Party committee for price control, had been in charge of the Party activities in the economic sphere for three years. The bulk of the routine work, however, devolves upon the Administrative Secretary, who not only employs and supervises the personnel in Party service but also prepares the budget for the national organization and approves the budgets of the provincial federations. The office has been held, since 1922, by the "forgotten man" of Fascism, Giovanni Marinelli; from the point of uninterrupted service in high Party office, his record is unequaled by any other person. Marinelli's continuous tenure and great ability—he is of ministerial caliber—do much to explain why the Party organization has functioned with regularity and consistency despite the frequent changes of secretaries, and the occasional holding of that office by men lacking political genius.

The National Directory is not intended to represent the provincial federations or any other regional interest, but the leading federal secretaries are actually included in its membership. As appointed by decree of January 12, 1937, it included the secretaries of the important federations of Milan, Florence, Venice, and Genoa (Rino Parenti, Ricciardo Ricciardi, Michele

Pascolato, and Giorgio Molino, respectively). Also a member is Pietro de Francisci, formerly a Minister of Justice, and at present the *rettore magnifico* (president) of the University of Rome.

On the third hierarchial level are found the most important officers in the provincial organizations: the federal secretaries and the federal commanders of the Young Fascists. The federal secretaries meet from time to time at the call of the national Secretary as an organ known as the National Council of the Party. The National Council, however, has an anomalous position, and appears to be little more than a device for summoning the federal secretaries to Rome to report personally upon their activities and to hear, at first hand, the orders of the Secretary.

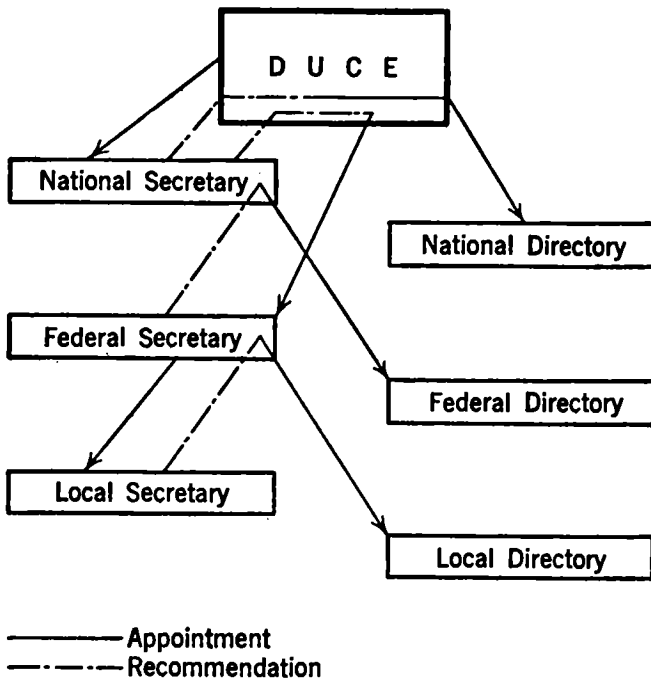
Other provincial officials, of lesser importance, occupy the fourth stratum in the hierarchy—most notably the members of the federal directories, the secretaries of the provincial Fascist University Groups, and the officers second in command in the Young Fascists.

Finally, the hierarchy is completed with the major officers of the local fasci, chiefly the local political secretaries and the members of the local directories, among others of less consequence.

It is obviously around these hierarchs that the formal structure of the Party is built. Two characteristic principles underlie the hierarchial system (1) each hierarch dominates and controls all hierarchs on lower levels, and (2) where several agencies or hierarchs are found on the same level, the superior hierarch among them controls all others. These principles may be illustrated in the procedure used in appointing and removing secretaries and members of federal and local directories. (a) The national Secretary, appointed by royal decree on recommendation of *Il Duce*, and removable at any time, recommends to the *Duce*, in turn, the appointment of members of the National Directory; (b) federal secretaries are appointed by *Il Duce* on the recommendation of the national Secretary, who is free to suspend them or to propose their removal; (c) the federal secretaries recommend to the Party Secretary, in turn, the membership of the federal directories, which may be suspended by the federal secretary or removed by the national Secretary; (d) local secretaries are appointed by the federal secretary of the

province, subject to approval by the national Secretary, and propose to the federal secretary, in turn, candidates for appointment to the local directories. All powers of control and removal are exercised by superior hierarchs, and, as this outline suggests, no provision is made for election of hierarchs at any point in the system. Here the Fascist Party is radically distinguished from the Communist Party in the Soviet Union where, under the principle of "democratic centralism," authority for Party personnel and policy rests theoretically with the rank and file of the membership. Hierarchy is undemocratic centralism.

DESIGNATION OF FASCIST PARTY HIERARCHS



D. Party Structure

Evidence of the localized origins of the Party is found in Article 2 of its statute: "The P. N. F. is composed of *Fasci di Combattimento*, which are grouped, in each province, in the Federation of *Fasci di Combattimento*." Although in the larger cities the basic *fascio* may be divided into regional groups, the communal *fascio* remains the basis of the Party organization. There are approximately 7,300 of these. Each of the 94 provincial federa-

tions is in charge of a federal secretary, or *federale*, who is also secretary of the local *fascio* in the provincial capital. The local and provincial organizations have an officially recognized juridical personality and, in many instances, possess extensive property holdings. Under the principle of hierarchy, the provincial federations are more important than the local *fasci* which are grouped to form them; and, for the same reason, power and control over the Party vest in the central organization.

In the national headquarters in the Palazzo del Littorio in Rome the Party maintains an establishment comparable in size and function to any regular government department. This establishment includes at least four different types of agencies.

The Party "offices" in the technical sense are placed under the joint direction of the Secretary and the National Directory for the management and control of the senior *Fasci di Combattimento* and the federations, and for supervision over all other forms of Party activity. These offices are related to the Secretary as government bureaus are normally related to a minister. They have a nation-wide jurisdiction, each maintaining direct contact with comparable offices organized on a local scale and attached to the local *fasci* (under a local secretary and directory) and to the federations (under the federal secretary and directory). Through them the routine administration of Party affairs is conducted.

There are six such offices at Palazzo del Littorio. (1) The political secretariat assists the Secretary in maintaining political contact with the leaders of the local *fasci* and provincial federations, in guaranteeing local orthodoxy, and in reinforcing weak points as they develop in the structure. Unlike the similarly named *Politburo* of the Communist Party, however, the political secretariat in the Fascist Party has no concern with the definition of a Party "line." (2) The administrative secretariat, directly in charge of the Administrative Secretary, maintains the central files and records relating to Party membership and finance, employs the personnel attached to the Party offices, and, in general, acts as a "service agency" for all Party offices. (3) The Press and Propaganda Office has had a narrower function since the creation of the Ministry of Press and Propaganda, but continues to maintain the Party's publication program and prepares the *Fogli d'Ordini*, the official bulletins of the Party.

(4) The Historical Office and (5) the Archives Office have functions explained by their titles. (6) The Permanent Price Control Committee, under one of the vice-secretaries, not only fixes wholesale and retail prices but also acts as an economic general staff for the Party and the Ministry of Corporations. Generally, however, the Fascist Party has not developed offices paralleling the regular government departments as has the Nazi Party in Germany.

In addition to the offices, a private secretariat (or *gabinetto*) renders personal assistance to the Secretary.

In the second place, there may be distinguished the Party agencies which maintain control over Party organizations (apart from the senior *fasci*) which have a strictly political character: (1) the *Fasci Giovanili di Combattimento*, or Young Fascists; (2) the Fascist University Groups, composed of students in institutions of higher learning;¹⁵ (3) the (senior) *Feminine Fasci*, the women's auxiliary; (4) the Young Fascist Women's Groups, from which the *Feminine Fasci* recruit their members; and (5) the recently organized *Massaie Rurali*, an organization of rural women. The local activities of each of these are controlled through appropriate central offices in charge of the Secretary and National Directory.

Somewhat different in character are the functional "associations" sponsored by the Party and generally identified as "peripheral," to set them off from the purely political organizations. The associations have a compulsory membership drawn from persons of either sex engaged in various forms of public activity. Five such associations are in existence: (1) The Fascist School Association, in which educators are organized in separate sections: (a) elementary schools; (b) middle schools; (c) university professors; (d) university assistants; and (e) institutions of fine arts and libraries; (2) The Fascist Association of Public Employees, combining professional administrators not included in some other association; (3) The Fascist Association of *Postelegrafonici*, that is, of postal, telegraph, and telephone workers; (4) The Fascist Association of Railway Workers; and (5) The Fascist Association of Workers in State Enterprises. The activities of such workers have a definite political interest, since they engage either in propaganda work (educators) or in work on public utilities of strategic importance in the event of

civil insurrection. Each association has a central secretariat, in charge of a trustee, and local and provincial affiliates.

Finally, the Party brings under its control four national organizations which, unlike the "peripheral associations" are not composed of persons in public service, but have a propaganda importance and have, as a single common denominator, the fact that for each the Secretary of the Party is the national president. No other classification than "miscellaneous" can describe (1) the National Union of Retired Italian Officers, (2) the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro*, the official leisure-time organiza-

MEMBERSHIP IN FASCIST PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATION	MEMBERSHIP AS OF OCTOBER 29			
	1936	1935	1934	1933
<i>Fasci di Combattimento</i>	2,027,400	1,975,714	1,851,777	1,415,407
Fascist University Groups.....	75,436	70,325	66,934	57,509
Young Fascists.....	684,848	740,099	657,613	456,472
Feminine Fascists.....	583,832	398,923	304,313	217,206
Young Fascist Women's Groups	189,242	128,191	83,053	57,125
<i>Massaie Rurali</i> (Rural Wives)...	571,663	241,654	.....	.....
Fascist School Association:				
Elementary School Section...	109,564	107,827	100,581	93,463
Middle School Section.....	29,134	27,096	24,305	21,041
University Professors Section.	2,697	2,560	2,568	2,127
University Assistants Section.	2,269	2,191	2,099	1,715
Museums and Libraries Section.....	1,286	1,459	1,351	597
Fascist Association of Public Employees.....	249,926	243,418	230,760	202,633
Fascist Association of Railway Workers.....	127,376	125,585	125,386	124,043
Fascist Association of Postal, Telegraph, Telephone Workers	76,762	77,275	74,859	71,025
Fascist Association of Workers in State Enterprises.....	92,517	75,796	70,890	66,403
National Union of Retired Italian Officers (U.N.U.C.I.)	187,365	168,849	151,491	134,284
<i>Dopolavoro</i> (O.N.D.).....	2,809,985	2,333,545	2,108,227	1,927,557
National Italian Olympic Committee (C.O.N.I.).....	796,998	564,245	455,728	612,559
Italian Naval League (L.N.I.)	48,102	43,674	41,827	37,450

tion for workers, (3) the National Italian Olympic Committee, which coordinates the activities of thirty athletic organizations and gives to national athletics a political orientation, and (4) the Italian Naval League. Membership in these organizations is not entirely restricted to those registered in the Party as members; and there is nothing to prevent an overlapping of membership as between them and the Fascist associations and Party.

Enough has been said of the Fascist Party to indicate that, on the basis of a restricted, disciplined membership and a highly integrated national organization, it works within the framework of the State to insure the success and continuity of the Regime. Negatively, it is a bulwark against counterrevolution; positively, it is a dynamo and reservoir of energy. It functions with vigor and force and, in so doing, introduces a new spirit into political-economic Italy.

NOTES

1. G. Volpe, *Storia del movimento fascista*, chap. III, Rome, 1932, offers an official interpretation.
2. For example, G. Bortolotto, *Lo stato e la dottrina corporativa*, vol. 1, p. 363, Bologna, 1931.
3. No. 4, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Jan. 23, 1937, no. 18.
4. Mussolini, *Scritti e discorsi*, definitive edition, vol. 7, pp. 127 ff., Milan, 1934.
5. *Relazione*, Dec. 5, 1929, XXVIII Legislature, Chamber of Deputies, Doc. 325-A. For a more detailed analysis, see H. A. Steiner, "The Constitutional Position of the *Partito Nazionale Fascista*," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 31, pp. 227-242, 1937.
6. *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Nov. 21, 1932, no. 268.
7. *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1936, no. 231.
8. *Ibid.*, Dec. 24, 1928, no. 298.
9. *Foro italiano*, 1932, part II, p. 209.
10. Statute of 1932, art. 6.
11. *Ibid.*, art. 14.
12. As fixed in the decree of the Head of the Government, Jan. 12, 1937, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Jan. 23, 1937, no. 18.
13. The Law on the Fascist Grand Council (1929) was amended to exclude the Party vice-secretaries by royal decree-law, Jan. 7, 1937, no. 5, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Jan. 25, 1937, no. 19.
14. *Il partito e lo stato*, Catania, 1937.
15. The statutes of these Party affiliates will be found in A. Marpicati, *Il Partito Fascista*, pp. 161-175, Milan, 1935.

Chapter V

LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF FASCIST GOVERNMENT

1. THE STATUTO OF 1848

A strange anomaly in authoritarian, antidemocratic Fascist Italy is the construction of a new system of government upon the foundation of the liberal, democratic *Statuto* granted by King Carlo Alberto on March 4, 1848. That Mussolini brought a revolution to Italy in 1922 is unquestioned, either by himself or by his opponents, but in the technical sense, the "revolution" was ostensibly accomplished within the limits of the constitution. Mussolini received the seals of office from the King, who had the authority to make the designation, four days after his predecessor, Facta, created a vacancy by resigning; and, since 1922, the basic Fascist legislation has been enacted with similar regard for the constitutional formalities. Except where new practices have been sanctioned by specific enactment, the *Statuto* of 1848 continues in force. Although the reading of that document discloses no clue to the practical operation of the Fascist system, it still provides for the definition of royal power, for the organization of the Senate, and, anomaly of anomalies, it contains the formal exposition of the rights of citizens!

On January 31, 1925, Mussolini appointed a Constitutional Commission of Eighteen, headed by the renowned Giovanni Gentile, to propose the reforms necessary to bring the Italian system of public law into harmony with the principle of dictatorship, as proclaimed by *Il Duce* earlier in the same month. In its report, dated July 5, 1925, the commission proposed to retain the basic structure of the state, merely "integrating and adjusting existing institutions" as experience dictated the necessity. Without intending to affirm "the eternal immutability of the existing political organization," the commission declared that the formation of an entirely new constitutional document "would be lacking in practical utility, as well as imprudent."¹

The *Statuto* lent itself admirably to piecemeal "integration and adjustment" by means of ordinary legislation. It is much shorter than the Constitution of the United States, and its 84 extremely brief articles are, by their nature, broad declarations of principle. Many of the features of parliamentary government, as practiced in Italy before 1922, had developed on the basis of unenacted customs and conventions (as in England). For example, the *Statuto* did not make it a matter of legal obligation for a prime minister to resign in the event of a legislative vote of non-confidence. There was, accordingly, no legal impediment to the abolition of responsible government, either by the evolution of a contrary set of practices or by legislative enactment.

Moreover, though by its nature no "eternal law," the *Statuto* contained no provision for its amendment, and, in fact, its formal text has never been altered. It might have been argued that the power to amend the *Statuto* rested exclusively in the hands of the king, in whose name it was proclaimed; but the practical solution was found in the nature of the legislative power which it created. No Italian court ventures to pass an independent judgment upon the constitutionality of acts adopted by Parliament and promulgated by the king. Regularity of legislative procedure, and not the substance of legislation, is the standard of constitutionality. Hence all laws, irrespective of their content, whether at variance with the text of the *Statuto* or not, become "constitutional" when the procedural formalities have been satisfied. All the basic legislation which lends the Fascist regime its distinctive character is contained in statutes of Parliament or in executive decrees issued under its authorization.

Italian public law took cognizance, only in 1928, of the distinction between "ordinary" and "constitutional" legislation. The law of December 9, 1928,² recognized the Fascist Grand Council as a constitutional organ of the State; in Article 12 it provided: "On all questions having a constitutional character, the views of the Fascist Grand Council must be heard." The power to enact legislation of a constitutional character, as well as other legislation, remains with Parliament, except that in the former case there must have been a preliminary examination in the Grand Council. The fact of consultation with the Grand Council is noted in the preamble to all constitutional enactments, but with no indication that the council has given its consent;

"consent" is not required under the law. Precisely what legislation has a "constitutional character" remains for future elaboration and interpretation, but the law specifies that proposed legislation touching the following subjects, at least, has that character: (1) succession to the throne and the powers and prerogatives of the crown; (2) the composition and function of the Fascist Grand Council, the Senate, and the Chamber of Deputies; (3) powers and prerogatives of the Head of the Government; (4) the power of the executive to issue decrees having the force of law; (5) syndical and corporative organization; (6) relations between the State and the Holy See; and (7) international treaties altering, by acquisition or renunciation, the territory of the State and the colonies.

Under its present organization, the agenda of the Grand Council is fixed by the Head of the Government, who is its president. The secrecy of its proceedings prevents knowledge of conflicts of opinion between the Grand Council and *Il Duce*, but there is no evidence that it has ever viewed one of his proposals adversely. While its approval is taken for granted at the present time, not even Mussolini could proceed very far in the face of its substantial opposition. Professor Schneider has stated an important practical limitation upon Mussolini's authority over the council: "It is composed largely of his chief supporters. But for that very reason he cannot afford to lose its support. A dictator can not dictate to every one."³ The advisory function given the Council was obviously intended to consolidate and protect the Fascist regime, by setting up a qualification which only *Fascist* authorities could satisfy, and by making, thereby, a revolt on the part of Parliament less probable.

If the Fascist Grand Council has no power to initiate constitutional proposals, it has nevertheless steadily taken on the function of giving definitive substance to the proposals vaguely formulated by *Il Duce*. For example, the law of February 5, 1934, concerning the organization of the corporations, took shape only after extensive discussion by the Council and study by a committee appointed from its membership. Similarly, and with Mussolini's authorization, the Fascist Grand Council in November, 1936, set up a Committee of Five to prepare the detailed legislation providing for the transition from the Chamber

of Deputies to the new Fascist and Corporative Chamber. It is not unlikely that the constitutional functions of the Grand Council will be widened as the new economic chamber, perhaps more properly described as "functional," takes over the legislative function.

Reference has been made to the definition of individual rights set forth in the *Statuto*.⁴ Every one of these, however, is subject to legislative infringement, and hence the Fascist regime has not been constitutionally prohibited from impairing private rights. For example, "All citizens enjoy civil and political rights equally, and are eligible for civil and military appointments, *except where the laws otherwise provide*" (Article 24). Again, "The press will be free, *but a law prevents its abuse*" (Article 28). Similarly, guaranties against arbitrary judicial proceedings, guaranties of the inviolability of domicile, of property, and of freedom of peaceful assembly are all subject to restraints imposed by statutes in the interest of public order. By such restraints "in the interest of public order," the Fascist regime has made a mockery of the guaranties with which the *Statuto* intended to buttress the rights of individuals.

2. THE MONARCHY

Constitutional systems gauge the "goodness" of kings, not by standards of personal morality, but by their willingness to permit free play to the political forces of democracy. Their negative role in politics is not incompatible with extraconstitutional influence and suasion, but the impressive ceremonies of the court and magnificent estates of the sovereign need not be taken as anything more than the regalia with which the nation dresses the king to express its own self-esteem. Italy has been fortunate in having kings who understood the rules and the fictions of the game.

According to the *Statuto*, "The State is ruled by a representative monarchic government. The throne is hereditary following the Salic law." Since the House of Savoy had administered the affairs of the Kingdom of Sardinia for generations before 1848, its reigning head was in a position to claim autocratic power and to view the grant of the *Statuto* as an act of condescension. With the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy on March 17,

1861, following the substantial incorporation of the Peninsula into the Kingdom of Sardinia, the House of Savoy could no longer pretend to the exercise of traditional jurisdiction, and its rule, of necessity, had to be guided by the responsible principle. That was the assumption upon which the peoples of Lombardy, Tuscany, and the Two Sicilies acted in voting to join the unified kingdom. Full awareness of the obligations of constitutional monarchs has earned for the kings of Italy a genuine popular affection and reverence. The average length of their reigns—with but three kings in the 88 years between 1849 and 1937—has made them bulwarks of national stability. So obvious were the advantages of the monarchical system that Mussolini dropped his republican ideas as soon as the Fascist movement began to gain momentum.

Exactly 70 years before Mussolini founded his Milan *fascio*, King Carlo Alberto secured the popularity of his house and attested his own faith in parliamentary institutions by abdicating under Austrian pressure. Vittorio Emanuele II, his son, accordingly ascended the throne on March 23, 1849. The bizarre monument to his memory which rises over Piazza Venezia in Rome recalls the progress of the *risorgimento* and the unification of Italy accomplished under his formal leadership. After a constructive reign of nearly 30 years, he was succeeded by his son, Umberto I, on January 9, 1878. Umberto had the ill fortune to rule during the least notable period of modern Italian history and to meet his death at the hand of an assassin on July 29, 1900. Thereupon, the present King, Vittorio Emanuele III, then thirty years of age, was proclaimed. By uninterrupted tenure of the throne since that date, he has become the senior king in Europe.

Active participation at the front during the World War earned for Vittorio Emanuele III the title: "All-victorious King," and the unquestioned allegiance of his people. His marriage to Princess Elena of Montenegro (October 24, 1896) has doubly protected the succession to the throne in the direct line. The present hereditary prince, Umberto, who is also Prince of Piedmont, was born at Racconigi, September 15, 1904. His attractive Belgian consort, to whom he was married with fitting pomp on January 8, 1930, gave birth to the future Vittorio Emanuele IV, the present Prince of Naples, on February 12, 1937.

In the present reign, the House of Savoy has ascended in rank from a royal to an imperial dynasty. Upon the conquest of Ethiopia, the king of Italy assumed the additional prerogatives, as well as the title, of Emperor of Ethiopia. The transition is recorded in the formula under which the laws and royal decrees of the Kingdom are now promulgated:⁵

VITTORIO EMANUELE III

BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE WILL OF THE NATION

KING OF ITALY
EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA

Somewhat less obviously than in the case of the king of England, the Italian king-emperor serves as a legal tie between the kingdom and its colonies. Natives in Libya and East Africa are his "subjects," as distinguished from "citizens of the kingdom."

The king enjoys the formal powers customarily ascribed to constitutional monarchs. Legislative power is exercised by the king and the Parliament, which he convokes, prorogues, and dissolves; he is the "supreme head" of the State, commander of its armed forces, in whose name its treaties are made and ratified; laws and decrees are promulgated with his sanction; justice is administered in his name; and officers of state bear appointment under his seal. Traditionally, his powers have been performed on ministerial initiative, and with the counter-signature of a "responsible" minister. Only in refusing Facta's request for a declaration of martial law in October, 1922, did Vittorio Emanuele III stand in the way of his ministers. Under Mussolini, while the personal prestige of the king has grown, his participation in public affairs has declined, and only occasionally has he sought to exert extraconstitutional influences.⁶ His independent judgment in the selection of future heads of the government (prime ministers) is presumably limited by the law of December 9, 1928, which gave the Fascist Grand Council authority to suggest candidates for the succession. Mussolini has capitalized upon the position of the king, and has consolidated the regime upon the royal foundation. As a result, the king has become the perfect "constitutional" monarch, a puppet

in the hands of his chief minister, the king who reigns without pretending to rule.

3. THE ABOLITION OF PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT: THE HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT

Fascism's outstanding mutation of the traditional Italian political system occurred with the abolition of parliamentary government by the law of December 24, 1925—Mussolini's Christmas gift to the nation. Responsible government, in the parliamentary sense, was not prescribed by the *Statuto*, but developed in customary practice from the requirement that the acts of the king needed the countersignature of a minister, and from its equivocal assertion: "The ministers are responsible." The assumption of a constitutional right on the part of Parliament to exact political responsibility from the government of the day produced in Italy a form of responsible, parliamentary government comparable to that of Great Britain and France. This fact was admitted in 1925 by the Constitutional Commission of Eighteen, which described its proposal as no more than a "return to the *Statuto*," with the king exercising, in substance as in form, the right of appointing and removing ministers: "The Ministry should be an organ of crown-power, but not of Parliament." From the Fascist point of view, this followed logically from the decision of January 3, 1925, to set up a totalitarian dictatorship.

Legislative control over a parliamentary government involves normally (1) the power to enact legislation independently of the government, or to amend its legislative proposals, (2) the power to compel resignation of the government by voting lack of confidence, and (3) the power to interpellate the government upon the conduct of its operations from day to day. The first two of these powers of the Italian Parliament were abolished by the law of December 24, 1925, and the third power was rendered meaningless. In addition, the law transformed the office of Prime Minister into the office of Head of the Government (*Capo del Governo*), endowing it with broader functions of direction and control.

Under the law, the Head of the Government, appointed and removed by the monarch, is specifically declared to be "responsible to the King for the general policy of the Government."

Individual ministers are made responsible to the king and to the Head of the Government. These definitions were sufficient to destroy the constitutional claims earlier advanced in behalf of Parliament. Moreover, the law gave to the Head of the Government an absolute veto over all subjects suggested for discussion in the legislature: "No subject may be listed in the order of the day of either of the two chambers without the approval of the Head of the Government" (Article 6). This prohibits (1) the introduction of objectionable private members' bills; (2) legislative motions to amend bills introduced by the government, particularly where, as in motions for the reduction of a minister's salary, a general debate on policy may be precipitated; (3) oral or written questions intended to elicit information which the government prefers not to divulge; and (4) interpellations, designed to enable members of the chambers to express their views in a debate on government policy. No one of these prohibitions is absolute, and in practice the government answers questions (less freely than before), permits a few harmless interpellations, and occasionally allows an ambitious private member to introduce a bill. More frequently than is generally supposed, the government also gives consideration to motions amending its bills so long as it is willing—but by the simple wave of his hand, the minister in charge of a bill signals his unwillingness to permit further amendments or to hear further discussion. Parliament, thus tamed, has become merely a device for registering approval of government proposals.

There was little in the office of Prime Minister before 1925 to attract Mussolini. The Prime Minister was then simply the *primus inter pares*, acting as umpire or referee to conciliate the representatives of the different parties combined in the cabinet of the day. The power of the Prime Minister over the internal affairs of the several ministries was vague and general, seldom exercised. To give effect to the principle of hierarchy, Mussolini felt the need of making the Prime Minister the supreme minister, a real "*Head of the Government*," with a legal and constitutional position appreciably above that of other ministers, designated by and responsible to him. The law of 1925 gave the new Head of the Government power to direct and coordinate the work of the ministries, a power which Mussolini never hesitates to use. As *Capo del Governo* he issues decrees of greater weight

than mere "ministerial decrees." And, in current practice, the countersignature of the Head of the Government appears on *all* laws and royal decrees, whether they have originated in a ministry held by Mussolini or otherwise.

Mussolini has found a number of ways of exerting his personal influence in the Council of Ministers and in the government departments. "Changes of the guard" occur periodically, when, without warning or notice, a minister finds himself reduced in rank, transferred to another ministry, or completely retired from public life, with no right to appeal or question the action. Mussolini also makes free use of his power to hold one or more ministries for himself. On June 1, 1936, for example, *Il Duce* was not only Head of the Government but also the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Interior, Colonies, Corporations, War, Marine, and Aeronautics; shortly thereafter he relinquished the Foreign Affairs, Colonies, and Corporations posts. When Mussolini is nominally the minister, the actual routine work is devolved upon an Undersecretary of State; nevertheless Mussolini maintains full responsibility and glories in it. An important practical result is that a young undersecretary, aware of the honor of acting as deputy for *Il Duce*, labors even more diligently to establish an efficiency record which will commend itself to the favorable notice of the Great Man. He may actually be honored with appointment as minister to replace Mussolini, as happened with Lessona (Colonies) and Lantini (Corporations) in June, 1936.

The administrative office of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in charge of an undersecretary, has also become an agency for coordinating the activities of a number of government institutions. The Commissariat for Migration and Internal Colonization and the Undersecretariat for Exchange and Credit, for example, work directly under the presidency. Likewise, certain "collegial" organs performing important administrative-judicial functions have been placed directly under the Head of the Government: (1) the functions of the Minister of Finance with respect to the Court of Accounts (*Corte dei Conti*) were transferred to the Head of the Government on February 5, 1930, and thereafter the President of the Court reported to Mussolini; (2) the same transfer of functions took place with respect to the State Advocacy-General on January 3, 1931; (3) the func-

tions of the Minister of the Interior in relation to the vitally important Council of State were transferred to Mussolini on August 21, 1931.

It thus becomes clear that in abolishing parliamentary government, in establishing greater control over the ministries, and in reorganizing certain features of the administrative system with a view to greater integration, Mussolini has made his position as Head of the Government a meaningful thing, a vital organ in Italian constitutional law under the Fascist regime.⁸

4. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The transformation in the office of Prime Minister has naturally enlarged the powers of the Head of the Government as President of the collective Council of Ministers. Creation of the Fascist Grand Council has minimized the place of the cabinet in the constitutional system. Nevertheless formal meetings of the Council of Ministers, generally held in the Palazzo Viminale in Rome, are necessary in order that legal effect may be given to royal decree-laws and to certain public appointments. Only ministers, in the strict sense, may participate; since January, 1937, the Secretary of the Party has been included ex officio in their number. Under the present arrangement, the maximum number of members of the Council of Ministers is sixteen: the Head of the Government, the Secretary of the Party, and ministers in charge of fourteen establishments. Since Mussolini has, from the beginning, held several portfolios in his own name, the total potential membership has never been realized.

Many of the ministries which existed at the time of the March on Rome have disappeared, or have been combined. Under Fascist auspices, three entirely new ministries have made their appearance: Aeronautics (August 30, 1925), Corporations (July 2, 1926), and Press and Propaganda (June 24, 1935). Changes in name frequently occur. On April 15, 1937, the Ministry for Colonies became the Ministry for Italian Africa and early in June, 1937, the Ministry of Press and Propaganda became the Ministry of Popular Culture.

The ministries, with their ministers as of June 1, 1937, are listed here in the order of their official precedence. Asterisks indicate other ministerial posts occupied since October 31, 1922, by Benito Mussolini.

- *Minister of Foreign Affairs: Count Galeazzo Ciano di Cortellazzo
- Minister of the Interior: Mussolini
- *Minister for Italian Africa: Alessandro Lessona
- Minister of Grace and Justice: Arrigo Solmi
- Minister of Finance: Paolo Thaon di Revel
- Minister of War: Mussolini
- Minister of Marine: Mussolini
- Minister of Aeronautics: Mussolini
- Minister of National Education: Giuseppe Bottai
- *Minister of Public Works: Giuseppe Cobolli-Gigli
- Minister of Agriculture and Forests: Edmondo Rossoni
- Minister of Communications: Antonio Stefano Benni
- *Minister of Corporations: Ferruccio Lantini
- Minister of Popular Culture: Dino Alfieri
- (Secretary of the Fascist Party: Achille Starace)

5. THE FASCIST GRAND COUNCIL

Four important functions performed by the Fascist Grand Council make it indispensable in the Fascist system. (1) Its functions as a constitutional organ, rendering advice on legislation of a constitutional character, have already been described. (2) In order to provide a continuous tenure in the post of the Head of the Government by persons acceptable to the high leadership of the Party, the Grand Council maintains a list of names to be submitted to the king in the event of a vacancy in the office. This innovation not only restricts the theoretical freedom of the king in his choice of ministers, but, since the council list is prepared "on the proposal of the Head of the Government," Mussolini is legally enabled to designate his own successor. Thus the Grand Council "institutionalizes" the regime and serves as a royal council to advise the king on the occasion of a ministerial crisis. (3) Under the electoral system of 1928, used in 1929 and 1934, the Fascist Grand Council prepared the national list of candidates for election to the Chamber of Deputies, a procedure which resulted practically in its appointment of the members of the lower house. (4) In the sphere of Party activity, the Grand Council defines general policies, and the Party statute, promulgated by royal decree, is submitted for its advice. In a word, the Fascist Grand Council has a voice in (1) constitutional legislation, (2) designation of the Head of the Government, (3) legislative organization, and (4) Party affairs.

The role of the Grand Council is that of a political general staff, meeting secretly, at the call of the Head of the Government, to deliberate on problems of policy and tactics. In its original constitutionalized form, under the law of December 9, 1928, the Grand Council had 52 members. The difficulty of maintaining secrecy and unity among so large a number occasioned the reorganization of December 14, 1929, and a reduction to less than 25 members. Now approximating in size the British cabinet, it is much better adapted to its purposes.⁹

Membership in the Grand Council falls into three major classifications. In a distinct category are the three surviving members of the Quadrumvirate of the March on Rome (Balbo, De Bono, and De Vecchi), who are members for life. In the second place, and numerically in the largest class, are the members ex officio by reason of their important public positions: (1) the presidents of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, (2) the ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Justice, Finance, National Education, Agriculture and Forests, Corporations, and Popular Culture, (3) the President of the Royal Academy of Italy, (4) the Secretary of the Party (who acts as secretary to the council), (5) the Commandant General of the M. V. S. N., (6) the President of the Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State, and (7) the presidents of the four major national syndical organizations, the National Fascist Confederations of Employers and Employees, respectively, in Industry and in Agriculture. Finally, the Head of the Government may appoint, for a three-year term, other persons who, as former members of the government, secretaries of the Party, or in other capacities, have rendered distinguished service to the Fascist cause. Before any of these claimants to a seat at the Grand Council table may actually participate in its activities, his appointment must be approved formally by the Head of the Government. This enables Mussolini to assert complete control at all times. Nevertheless, it should be obvious that the deliberations of the Council are likely to be given immediate and direct effect in the significant establishments and departments of the government where its members hold the most important key positions.

Secrecy shrouds the deliberations of the Grand Council, but its meetings are state occasions, attended with appropriate pomp. ~~Several meetings are held annually, at the call of *Il Duce*, with advance publicity and preparation.~~ Meetings generally open

at 10 P.M., in Mussolini's Palazzo Venezia; they continue as far into the morning as may be necessary, and are often held over a period of days. Before the session opens, the *gagliardetto*, or banner, of the National Directory of the Party is carried from Palazzo del Littorio accompanied by a Party and military escort of honor. Waiting crowds view the procession with keen interest, saluting the *gagliardetto* as it passes into Palazzo Venezia, saluting again as the banner is raised on the balcony. Its presence there has the ceremonial significance of the display of the Mace in the British House of Commons. When the session of the Grand Council has been concluded, official communiques summarize the proceedings by noting the subjects discussed, or by giving the text of the resolutions which the council often adopts. No news, apart from a speech by *Il Duce*, is so clearly assured a heavy-type display on Page One of all newspapers.

NOTES

1. *Relazioni e proposte della commissione per lo studio delle riforme costituzionali*, p. 9, Florence, 1932. Texts of the *Statuto* appear in W. F. Dodd, *Modern Constitutions*, vol. 2, pp. 1ff., Chicago, 1909; H. L. McBain and L. Rogers, *The New Constitutions of Europe*, pp. 550ff., New York, 1922; F. R. and P. Daresté, J. Delpech, and J. Laferrière, *Les Constitutions modernes*, 4th ed., vol. 2, pp. 79-86, Paris, 1928-1932.
2. *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Dec. 11, 1928, no. 287.
3. H. W. Schneider, *The Fascist Government of Italy*, p. 50, New York, 1936.
4. Arts. 24-32.
5. Royal decree-law (hereafter abbreviated as R. D.-L.), May 14, 1936, no. 831, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, May 18, 1936, no. 115.
6. The present king is authoritatively credited with having converted the Ethiopian campaign from an exclusive Fascist venture to a joint Army-Black Shirt enterprise. He is also credited with the replacement of Marshal Emilio De Bono, in command of the expedition, by Marshal Pietro Badoglio, his old friend, and Chief of the Italian General Staff.
7. *Relazioni e proposte*, cited, pp. 31, 39.
8. Cf. V. Corsini, *Il Capo del Governo nello stato fascista*, Bologna, 1935.
9. In several particulars the membership of the Grand Council has been altered since 1929: the Minister of Press and Propaganda became a member, ex officio, early in 1936; early in 1937 (R. D.-L., Jan. 7, 1937, no. 5) the membership of the vice-secretaries of the Fascist Party in the council was abolished.

Chapter VI

LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

1. THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE LEGISLATIVE FUNCTION

In nearly every dictatorial regime organized on totalitarian lines, in Germany, Austria, Portugal, and the Soviet Union, as in Italy, the substantive power of legislation has been transferred from the regular legislative channels to the executive authority. Democracies, such as the United States, Great Britain, and France, acknowledge the necessity of regulating highly technical subjects by experts employed in the administrative branch. But there, even when the volume of "administrative legislation" exceeds the legislative output of Parliament, the guiding principle is the definition of policy and the control of the process by the legislature. The quest of dictatorships for "efficiency" combines with an avowed distrust of selected legislatures to relegate the legislature to the background even in the definition of general policies. Practically *all* powers of legislation come to center in the executive. This transformation was accomplished in Italy by the basic law of January 31, 1926, on the "Power of the Executive Authority to Issue Legal Rules." The law of December 24, 1925, on the Head of the Government, joins with the law of 1926 to give the legislative process in Italy a special flavor.

The law of 1926 confirms the innocuous power of the executive to issue decrees to give effect to laws and to reorganize the administration. In addition, however, the government is given authority, in extraordinary causes of "urgent and absolute necessity" to issue decrees with the force of law concerning any subject. If interpreted literally, the grant of authority appears neither exceptional nor dictatorial. Under the law, however, the judgment of the government concerning the "necessity" of legislation by decree is subject to no legal control whatever. The government merely recites, in the preamble to its measure,

the belief that urgency requires the action which it proposes to take. Under cover of that authority, the government in Italy has given immediate legal effect to policies in every field, even when the absence of emergency is notorious. Such decrees may set aside earlier statutes of Parliament; and there is nothing to prohibit an actual modification in the *Statuto* of 1848.

Certain formal restraints attend the exercise of the emergency-decree power. All such decrees must be *submitted* to Parliament for their "conversion into law" before its third succeeding meeting; if Parliament fails to convert the decree within two years, it then lapses. Where a decree lapses, or where Parliament categorically refuses its approval—which has never happened—the legality of acts completed under cover of the decree is unquestioned. The formal reservation of power to Parliament involves no actual restraint, either upon the definition of basic, far-reaching policies or upon the regulation of administrative and technical details.

Italy was governed almost exclusively by decree between 1925 and 1927; adoption of the enabling act in 1926 afforded the government an opportunity of having its earlier decrees of dubious validity converted and ratified. Presumably, for each decree, a corresponding "conversion law" is prepared by the administration, but in the period 1925–1927, the number of decrees was so large that the procedure was not followed. Instead, recourse was had to the procedure of "bloc conversion," whereby a single statute provided for the conversion of scores and hundreds of decrees at one time. This procedure, as well as the transformation of the function of Parliament generally, is well illustrated from the record of the XXVII Legislature (1924–1929). In this five-year period, the conversion of 5,553 decrees was arranged on the basis of 1,589 government bills. Discussion of these conversion laws, as nominal as it was, was the only serious business conducted by Parliament during the period; only 88 of the bills introduced by the government were *not* for the conversion of decrees. "Bloc conversion" is no longer necessary, now that the Fascist administrative machine is in full running order. But the legislature has been accustomed to its new role, that of merely stamping with its approval the proposals already given effect by the government, and for that reason, if for no other, the forms of legislative organization and

the methods used in parliamentary procedure have relatively small importance.¹

The collapse of the genuine legislative function is also illustrated from other practices. For example, in the XXVIII Legislature (1929-1934), a total of 2,032 legislative proposals was introduced into the Chamber of Deputies. Of these, 2,021 were *disegni di leggi* (projects of law) introduced by the government, while only 11 were measures initiated by private members. Of the 2,021 government bills, 1,997 were passed, and of these, 1,296 provided for the conversion of decrees. Of the 24 government bills not passed, 23 had been withdrawn after introduction and 1 remained on the calendar of unfinished business. Of the 11 private members' bills, only 5 became laws. There is no indication that this tendency is to be reversed: in the first 30 months of the XXIX Legislature, which opened in 1934, there were introduced 1,404 government bills, but not a single bill by a private member.

As is to be expected, the record of questions and interpellations shows the effectiveness of the dictatorship. In the chamber, in the XXVIII Legislature, only 4 harmless interpellations were admitted; members submitted, for information, 291 oral and written questions, averaging slightly more than 1 for each of the 238 meetings held in the period. In the first 30 months of the XXIX Legislature, there was no record of an interpellation, and only 25 written and oral questions had been directed to occupants of the Government Bench.²

As the organization of Parliament is examined, it must be understood that the legislative bodies which now operate in Italy perform functions appreciably different from those generally associated with the business of legislating.

2. THE SENATE

With the Italian Senate, Fascists have had no complaint. No change with respect to its membership or organization has been made since 1922. In the Italian bicameral system, the Senate has traditionally played the passive role and has made the Italian Parliament, for all practical purposes, a unicameral legislature. From the beginning of Italian experience under the *Statuto*, the Senate has been a highly conservative body, recruited from the royal family, the aristocracy, the wealthy middle class,

the retired bureaucracy, and from such professions as law and medicine. Royal princes become members upon attaining their majority, but seldom participate actively. All other members are appointed by royal decree for life, and are required at the time of appointment to be over forty and to possess one of 21 separate qualifications. Acceptance of appointment signifies a desire to relinquish active political ambitions. Occasionally the proceedings in the Senate have been enlivened by the penetrating and critical comment of such figures as Benedetto Croce, but on the whole the Senate was, and is, content to perform its perfunctory function of approving bills sent to it from the Chamber. Its official voice weighs equally with that of the lower house.

Excluding the royal members, the Senate had exactly 400 members on October 28, 1936. It was by pure coincidence that its membership equaled that of the Chamber on that date; normally, the membership is between 350 and 450, fluctuating rapidly owing to the high death rate of its personnel.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SENATE, 1932-1936^a

YEAR	MEMBERS APPOINTED	MEMBERS DECEASED	MEMBER- SHIP, AS OF Dec. 31
1932.....	..	..	365
1933.....	59	29	395
1934.....	76	25	446
1935.....	none	29	417
1936 (to Oct. 28).....	none	17	400

Two of the members in 1936 were nonagenarians; at the other extreme, only three were younger than fifty; the majority were in their seventies. More than 75 per cent of the present membership owes its appointment to the Fascist regime; but those Senators appointed before October, 1922, who have not been converted to the Fascist cause, generally abstain from attending, and the Senate has thus become almost as enthusiastically Fascist as the chamber. The President of the Senate, who is appointed by royal decree, has since 1929 been Luigi Federzoni, the ex-Nationalist leader. Mussolini, in his frequent addresses to the Senate, shows uncommon deference to that august body of

elders. There is no reason to be otherwise, or to demand reorganization. The Senate is gradually coming to be a convenient repository for retired Fascist leaders and administrators.

The Senate is as inactive as the age of its members suggests. Between 1929 and 1936, no Senator exercised his option of introducing a private member's bill; there were only 7 interpellations, none since 1934; and in the same seven-year period, only 91 questions were directed to the Government Bench.

3. THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

The Chamber of Deputies was not so easily tamed as the Senate. Fascists were stimulated by the political opposition centered there to give it two thorough overhauls, with a third in prospect for a different reason. As a result, the phrase "legislative reform" in Italy has relation only to the reorganization of the chamber.

In the first 23 chambers elected under the *Statuto* (1848-1913), politicians of a prevailing conservative tinge dominated the scene. Governments fell frequently under the pressure of criticism in the chamber, but the new government formed after a ministerial crisis retained many of the old personalities and, in place of changing national policies, merely changed political tactics. Politics were largely personal, and such names as Depretis, Crispi, and Giolitti were of far greater importance than the formal program of the party they headed. Between March 25, 1876, and July 29, 1887, there were formed eleven cabinets, of which eight were headed by Depretis, five being in immediate succession. Electoral reforms in 1912, however, greatly increased the Socialist representation in the elections of 1913; and, in the first postwar elections, the newly organized Popular (Catholic) Party of Don Sturzo appeared in strength to confuse the situation. Fascists attributed the growing strength of smaller parties to the system of proportional representation as used in November, 1919, and March, 1921, although sometimes overlooking the fact that without "P. R." there might have been no Fascist Party.

The Acerbo Reform (1923)

Shortly after the March on Rome, Giacomo Acerbo proposed to insure a chamber under control of an absolute Fascist majority.

His reform, adopted in 1923, retained the principle of proportional representation, but with so fundamental a limitation that it lost its original meaning: the party winning a mere plurality of votes, so long as that exceeded 25 per cent of the total cast, was to receive two-thirds of the seats—only the remaining one-third being distributed among other parties in accordance with the proportional principle. The Acerbo system was used but once—in the elections of April, 1924, the first under Fascist auspices. When the returns were in, Mussolini's earned vote (70 per cent) entitled him to 374 out of 575 seats in the chamber.⁴

Wounds caused by Mussolini's high-pressure tactics in that campaign have not yet healed. Italian liberals quickly awakened to the danger. The Socialist deputy, Matteotti, voiced his fiery denunciation of the Black Shirts in a meeting at Montecitorio on May 30, 1924,⁵ leading the protest. A few days later, he was assassinated. Likening their action to the Aventine Secession of ancient times, the minority parties thereupon withdrew. Only a few opportunists remained to join forces with the Fascists. The political turmoil engendered by the Matteotti affair and the Aventine Secession crystallized Mussolini's dictatorial ambitions, and on January 3, 1925, the dictatorship was formally proclaimed. The protesting deputies, penitents now that they realized their tactical error in leaving Fascists alone on the scene, were formally disqualified and their seats vacated. Thus, with no need for another election, Mussolini had a chamber almost exclusively Fascist at his command during the period of basic constitutional reconstruction, 1925–1926.

The Reform of 1928

Not until May 17, 1928, did the Fascists proceed to the second of their electoral reforms. The reform of 1928, and the reform pending in 1937, had, unlike the Acerbo reform, fairly definite objectives of a permanent character: (1) A plan of "election by appointment" was devised, using the facilities of the Fascist Grand Council and a popular "plebiscite." (2) Giving substance to the theory of national unity, the fifteen electoral districts used in the elections of 1924 were abolished, and replaced by a single "national district," as large as the nation. (3) As has been noted, the Fascists intended the legislature to serve

merely as a rubber stamp, for the actual legislation given effect through administrative-political channels. (4) In keeping with the growth of the corporative idea, the territorial principle of election by districts was replaced by the functional principle—of designation of legislators on the basis of economic affiliation. Admittedly, the legislation of 1928 took but a half step in this direction. (5) Finally, denying democratic “electionism” in principle, the individual elector no longer has a choice of candidates; he simply participates, with his fellows, in what Fascists regard as a national vote of confidence for the regime. Legislative elections have become merely excuses for an intensive propaganda campaign conducted according to fixed schedule.

In 1928 the membership of the chamber was fixed at 400, elected by a national list. Since 10,000,000 voters cannot actually select the names of individual deputies as a group, the heart of the system is found in its unique procedure of nomination. There are two distinct stages in this procedure: (1) the “preliminary designation” of names by various associations, and (2) the formal “nomination” of a slate by the Fascist Grand Council.

Cognizance of the functional principle was taken only in the machinery of preliminary designations. A list of 1,000 names was submitted by (1) certain especially recognized cultural and propaganda organizations which, through their directing councils, supplied 200 of the total of 1,000, and (2) by the (then existing) thirteen National Fascist Confederations, which supplied the remaining 800 names. An elaborate scheme was devised for allocating these 800 preliminary designations between the confederations, and in the elections of 1929 and 1934, the proportions prevailed as shown in the next table.

The decree dissolving one chamber in anticipation of the elections specifies a date upon which the 1,000 names so designated are to be presented to the Grand Council.⁶ Thereupon, the council selects the 400 names to be placed upon the “national list.” The council is, however, not restricted to the individuals designated, but may go outside the lists to nominate individuals of its own selection. There is no obligation to respect the proportions which prevail in the distribution of preliminary designations, and there has been a wide variance from them in practice.

**PRELIMINARY DESIGNATIONS BY NATIONAL FASCIST
CONFEDERATIONS UNDER THE ELECTORAL LAW
OF MAY 17, 1928**

FASCIST CONFEDERATION	PER- CENTAGE OF 800 DESIG- NATIONS	ACTUAL NUMBER OF DESIG- NATIONS
1. National Confederation of Agriculturists.....	12	96
2. National Confederation of Agricultural Workers....	12	96
3. National Confederation of Industrialists.....	10	80
4. National Confederation of Industrial Workers.....	10	80
5. National Confederation of Merchants.....	6	48
6. National Confederation of Commercial Workers....	6	48
7. National Confederation of Operators of Maritime Communications and Aerial Transport.....	5	40
8. National Confederation of Workers in Maritime Communications and Aerial Transport.....	5	40
9. National Confederation of Operators of Land Com- munications and River Navigation.....	4	32
10. National Confederation of Workers in Land Com- munications and River Navigation.....	4	32
11. National Confederation of Credit and Insurance...	3	24
12. National Confederation of Credit and Insurance Workers.....	3	24
13. National Confederation of the Professions and Arts	20	160
Total.....	100	800
To which add designations of twenty recognized cultural and related organizations.....	...	200
Total of preliminary designations made to the Fascist Grand Council.....	...	1,000

For the purpose of presenting the national list to the nation, Mussolini summoned in 1929 and 1934, promising to continue the precedent in future years, a "Quinquennial Assembly" of the leading figures in the regime. His important declarations of

policy on those occasions opened the electoral "campaign," for, even if the result is a foregone conclusion, the propagandists of the regime cannot be denied the great opportunity thus given them of enlarging upon the achievements of the regime. The formal balloting takes place after a short campaign. The 10,060,426 (95 per cent of those registered) who went to the polls on March 25, 1934,⁷ were handed two separate ballots with

ELECTION OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, XXIX

LEGISLATURE, MARCH 25, 1934

(From *Compendio statistico italiano*, 1936, p. 234)

"COMPARTMENT" (REGION)	NUMBER OF REGIS- TERED ELECTORS	NUMBER VOTING		FAVORABLE VOTES		UNFAVOR- ABLE VOTES	
		NUMBER	PER CENT	NUMBER	PER CENT	NUM- BER	PER CENT
Piemonte.....	1,061,111	1,005,843	94.79	1,004,171	99.83	1,500	0.15
Liguria.....	387,585	372,684	96.16	371,757	99.75	875	0.24
Lombardia.....	1,584,443	1,499,953	94.67	1,492,847	99.53	6,470	0.43
Venezia Tridentina.....	171,191	157,288	91.88	156,410	99.44	814	0.52
Veneto.....	1,063,381	1,014,798	95.43	1,011,423	99.67	3,228	0.32
Venezia Giulia e Zara.....	248,519	234,835	94.49	234,360	99.80	443	0.19
Emilia.....	885,203	862,819	97.47	862,367	99.95	394	0.04
Toscana.....	801,152	783,209	97.76	782,811	99.95	387	0.05
Marche.....	298,915	284,310	95.11	284,197	99.96	109	0.04
Umbria.....	171,321	168,354	98.27	168,326	99.98	22	0.01
Lazio.....	532,940	505,231	94.80	504,504	99.86	670	0.13
Abruzzi e Molise.....	383,081	368,527	96.20	368,477	99.99	46	0.01
Campania.....	799,646	770,402	96.34	770,311	99.99	73	0.01
Puglie.....	532,933	511,465	95.97	511,415	99.99	31	0.01
Lucania.....	102,463	98,733	96.38	98,729	100.00	0	0.00
Calabrie.....	399,648	378,293	94.66	378,284	100.00	4	0.00
Silicia.....	892,568	840,556	94.17	840,394	99.98	122	0.01
Sardegna.....	211,508	203,126	96.04	203,092	99.98	27	0.01
Kingdom.....	10,527,608	10,060,426	95.56	10,043,875	99.84	15,215	0.15*
Election, 1929.....	9,682,630	8,661,820	89.46	8,517,838	98.34	135,773	1.57

* Tabulation does not include void and contested ballots (1,336; 0.01 per cent).

which to express their views on the question: "Do you approve of the list of deputies designated by the Fascist Grand Council?" The affirmative ballot was stamped with the national colors; the negative ballot was simply white. The folding of the ballot presumably disguised its affirmative or negative character, but there was little difficulty in ascertaining which was used. In

1934, less than 1 per cent of those voting exercised the negative option. The official result is shown in the above tabulation.

Provision was also made in the law of 1928 for a supplementary electoral procedure in the unlikely event of the defeat of the national list at the polls. There is little point in examining the involved details of the alternative scheme, since there has never been, and will probably never be, occasion to use it. This statement does not imply the perpetual existence of the Fascist regime. It merely assumes that the ultimate collapse of the regime will not be the consequence of a popular disavowal at the polls. It can only be disavowed through electoral channels after it has already disintegrated or collapsed under the pressure of other forces.

The Future of the Chamber

That the XXIX Chamber, elected in 1934, is to be the last of the Chambers of Deputies has been made clear on several occasions. A minor circumstance promises at least some revision, since the 13 confederations which made designations under the law of 1928 have been reduced to 9. The reform which Mussolini contemplates, however, will involve more than a simple readjustment of the "proportions." The general plan which he announced on November 14, 1933, was clarified in the speech delivered before the General Assembly of the National Council of Corporations, March 23, 1936, in which *Il Duce* said:

I announced that the National Council of Corporations might very well replace, and would in due time replace *in toto*, the Chamber of Deputies. Today I confirm this statement. The Chamber, which has become promiscuous in composition, for some of its members are also members of this Assembly, will be superseded by the National Assembly of Corporations organized as the Fascist and Corporative Chamber comprising, at first, the total membership of the twenty-two corporations. The procedure by which the new representative and legislative assembly will be formed, its rules, its functions, its prerogatives, its character, are problems involving questions of a doctrinal and technical nature which will be examined by the highest organ of the regime, the Grand Council.

By resolution of November 18, 1936, the Grand Council appointed a Committee of Five, consisting of the President of the Chamber (C. Ciano), the Secretary of the Party (Starace), and the Ministers of Justice (Solmi), National Education

(Bottai), and Corporations (Lantini), to prepare the concrete legislation necessary to complete the transition. Following the report of the council committee, the present chamber is expected to meet in a "suicide session" to vote formally upon the change. When the 824 members of the General Assembly meet as the Fascist and Corporative Chamber, it is reasonable to suppose that there will have been also a redefinition of the legislative function in general. The transition has been well paved.

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Before 1926, France, with its famed Napoleonic system, represented the most highly integrated and centralized form of local government and administration. The Italian system, organized on the same general lines, was modified in 1926 to bring about greater centralization, and today it is difficult to say whether Germany or Italy has the most effective centralization. Inherent among the problems of a totalitarian regime is that of creating the mechanism to guarantee the specific enforcement of every national law or decree, the observance of the most minute administrative regulation. Likewise, where the totalitarian regime rejects the electoral principle, the reform of local government must necessarily eliminate popular participation in the administrative process.

The basis of local government in Italy is the commune, of which there were 7,339 on April 21, 1936. These administrative areas, varying widely in population and size from the smallest hamlet to the large metropolitan areas, cover the entire Peninsula; its every square inch, rural or urban, is identified with one of the communes. Municipal administration centers in the office of the *podestà*, an official appointed for a four-year term (but subject to reappointment, or to removal at any time) by royal decree, and thus immediately responsible to the Minister of the Interior. The *podestà* is often compared to the American city manager. But while both hold office during good behavior, and are presumed to have appropriate technical experience, the American city manager is locally chosen and is responsible to a local council, while the *podestà* is a bureaucratic appointee of the central authority, acting as its agent. The *podestà*, in the Fascist regime, replaces the former *sindaco* who, locally chosen,

was comparable to the French *maire*. The former city councils have given way to appointed councils, consisting of from 8 to 40 members. The precise number is fixed by the provincial prefect, who also appoints the members, taking account of the economic activities of the commune and the principle of equality of "representation" for the interests of capital and labor. In practice, the function of local economic legislation is performed by other agencies; but as the corporate system evolves in other fields, the administration of the communes is theoretically expected to maintain the same pace.

Unquestionably, however, the *podestà* is the responsible officer of the commune, acting as its local administrator and legislator (with the "advice" of the local council), as well as acting as the agent of Rome. The council, which the *podestà* may suspend or dissolve, exists merely to advise the *podestà* at his request, and on the basis of an agenda which he fixes. It possesses no independent rulemaking or lawmaking authority, and hence there is no division of municipal responsibility.

Only in Rome does an exceptional regime prevail. There the officer comparable to the *podestà* is the governor, appointed by the Minister of the Interior, after consulting the Council of Ministers. The commune there is officially known as the *Governatorato* of Rome. Where other large communes have proportionately large councils, the *consulta* which advises the governor of Rome has but 12 members. The special arrangement for Rome results from the keen interest of the regime in the affairs of the capital, from its identification of municipal progress in the city with the progress of the regime toward the recreation of Imperial Rome.

Municipal functions in Italy cover a large field, chiefly by reason of the tendency to increase the number of socialized municipal services and utilities. Although the administrative systems of all communes conform to the same general pattern, each is permitted a limited discretion in setting up the agencies appropriate to the precise stage which socialization has attained. The public services may be administered directly by the municipal bureaus, or by special corporations or institutions. But from this disparity in detailed organization it is not to be inferred that the judgment of the local administrator may be at variance with that of the Ministry of the Interior or of other ministries,

particularly the Ministry of Finance, which have a voice in local affairs.

The communes, in turn, are combined into the 94 provinces, which stand between them and the central authority, at a level comparable to the French *départements*. The subprefectures which formerly existed on an intermediate level (like the *arrondissements* in France) were abolished in 1926. In each province, the prefect represents the interest of the Ministry of the Interior, and assumes responsibility for the supervision of provincial and communal affairs of local concern. The prefect may set aside the acts of the communal *podestà*, and may actually take over his function. While the routine administration of the province is in the hands of an appointed *preside* and rectory, the prefect examines their activities and exercises a veto over their decisions and orders. Under many circumstances, an appeal is permitted from the overruling activity of the prefect to the Minister of the Interior and to the Council of State which, however, usually sustain the prefect.

In each province, apart from the prefect, there is found (1) a *preside* and rectory, constituting what is known technically as the provincial "administration," (2) a prefectural council, consisting of two members and the prefect, which advises the prefect and participates in the examination of local financial affairs, and (3) the provincial *giunta*, which aids the prefect in the review of local decrees and which also serves as the lowest court of administrative law. The rectory replaces the former popularly elected general councils, but lacks the actual importance which the basic law of 1934 appears to ascribe to it. The prefectural council, a closed body, seldom performs acts requiring public notice. Of particular interest is the *giunta*, which is not only active but which also includes among its nine members four representatives designated by the Secretary of the Fascist Party. The Party members aid in coordinating the official public administration with the provincial organization of the Party; and, by their official position in the administrative hierarchy, they are in a position to insure the perfect conformity of the acts of communal and provincial administrators with the directions and policies of the Fascist Party.

~~Central control over the local system, including power to~~
appoint and remove local functionaries, as well as to review and

set aside their acts, vests in the Minister of the Interior—often with the advice of the Council of State, which is also the highest administrative court, hearing administrative appeals from the provincial *giunte*. Since the most important problems in local government are financial in character—for 20 years, Italian communes have generally operated at a deficit—the Minister of Finance has assumed a variety of functions. Acting as an advisory group to the Ministers of the Interior and Finance in such matters is the Central Commission for Local Finance. The symmetry of the hierarchial pyramid is somewhat marred by the distribution of other minor functions in relation to local affairs among other ministries, but this distribution has not been carried to the point of impairing the basic responsibilities. Thus, the Minister of Communications has a concern in the management of local public utilities and the Minister of Public Works reviews the plans of the provinces and communes in the construction of highways, river and lake improvements, and similar subjects.

Mention must also be made of the so-called “compartments”—the 18 large areas which meet the eye when a map of Italy is first inspected. The compartment has no administrative officers or councils, no corporate personality, no autonomous jurisdiction. Nevertheless, the 18 compartments aid in bridging the administrative gap between the 94 provinces and the central authority. For many administrative and statistical purposes, the provinces are classified by compartments. In most instances, the compartments are natural areas, which may formerly have had a political importance as independent kingdoms or duchies. Thus, the important compartment of Lombardy corresponds to the former duchy of Lombardy; its center is Milan, also the capital of the province of Milan, and office of one of the 18 Courts of Appeals. Recognition that the provinces into which the historic region of Lombardy has been divided have certain common interests and requirements lends an air of practicality and realism to what might otherwise be a purely artificial administrative dispensation. It is not unusual for the Minister of the Interior to issue an instruction or decree to be enforced by the prefects of the various provinces in Lombardy, thus singling out that compartment and its provinces for special treatment as a unit.

Italian local administration is characterized by: (1) a direct contact between local and central authorities through the power to appoint and control personnel; (2) the direct review by higher authorities of all local and provincial actions, to insure conformity with national policy; (3) the rejection of communal and provincial "electionism," and the placing of all local administration on a purely professional basis; (4) the introduction of the Fascist Party into the administrative system through the provincial *giunte*; and (5) the previously unmentioned special provisions of the Local Government Act of March 3, 1934, which are intended to break down artificial, absolute uniformity, by making possible (a) the readjustment of local-government area boundaries and (b) the setting up of special "unions" between (1) communes, (2) provinces, and (3) communes and provinces, for the joint performance of specific projects or programs which may be of common interest to the participating members.

5. LAW AND JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Italian genius for legislation, to which the *jus civile* and *jus gentium* of Ancient Rome and the various codes of the Roman jurists bear evidence, has found expression in Fascist Italy in different ways, notably (1) in the development of new bodies of law to govern the new situations created under the Fascist auspices, and (2) in the revision of the standard codes originally given effect by their predecessors. In common with other dictatorships, the Fascist regime persists in coloring the administration of all forms of law with political purposes and motives, feeling, as Professor Panunzio has stated, that "a revolution is not a revolution if it does not work and produce a profound transformation in the state and in law."⁸ Dictatorships are characteristically impatient of legal restraints laid upon their feverish activity by old rules of law; they view law as an instrument for the accomplishment of their immediate objectives; and insist that jurists and prosecutors alike resolve all disputes with an eye to the policies of the regime.

Special Courts

Apart from the familiar civil and penal (judicial) tribunals described below, there exists in Italy a number of specialized courts to administer various "non-judicial" bodies of law.

All are important: (1) The Supreme Tribunal for the Defense of the State, organized following the attempted assassinations of Mussolini in 1926, functions under the immediate direction of *Il Duce*, and in full secrecy, for the punishment of the highest political offenses. In the circumstances, it creates its own rules of law as need arises. (2) The "Public Security," the administrative police, functions through its own tribunals to punish violators of the Law on Public Security, the basic legal instrument by which the regime establishes standards for public behavior in matters affecting politics—such as public assemblies and political associations. The Public Security administers a definite code of law, but is permitted wide discretion in determining whether the specific acts of particular individuals or groups are to be prohibited and punished because of their political implications; the Public Security uses no juries and no formal trial procedures, and no appeal to ordinary tribunals is permitted from its sentences. (3) The various military courts, set up under military auspices, apply the sanctions of the military penal codes; while these relate normally to the conduct of members of the armed forces, they contain many principles applicable to private individuals. (4) The special body of syndical-corporative law, which has emerged to define the relationships between capital and labor, and the conditions and forms of production generally, is administered by syndical and corporative agencies, the Ministry of Corporations, and the special labor magistracies. (5) Administrative law—the law of public officers and government establishments—is in Italy, as in France, a distinct body of law, administered, as has been noted, by the provincial *giunte* and the Council of State.

Judicial Tribunals

Judicial courts, so described to distinguish them from political, police, military, labor, and administrative tribunals, have the greatest quantitative importance in the life of the Italian, applying the general principles of criminal and civil law, as well as commercial and maritime law, in litigation involving private parties. Among these courts, the Court of Cassation in Rome is recognized as the Italian equivalent of the Supreme Court of the United States, with the obvious difference that an Italian court is no more concerned with the passing of an

independent judgment upon the constitutionality of legislation than a British or French court. Five Courts of Cassation (Rome, Turin, Florence, Naples, and Palermo), each functioning separately, existed at the time of the March on Rome; the first notable Fascist reform in the field of law was their consolidation in 1923 into the present single court in Rome. Members of the cassation are appointed upon recommendation of the Minister of Justice, the highest administrative officer charged with supervising the operation of the judicial system. The large membership of the Court of Cassation seldom meets in a "combined" session; its civil and penal functions are normally discharged by four sections organized on functional lines.

A fairly clear line is drawn between civil and penal courts. In *civil cases*, a proceeding may be initiated in any one of four courts: (1) with the local conciliator who, in 7,692 small districts, attempts to settle on a basis of arbitration the petty squabbles of neighbors; (2) with the *pretore* (praetor), who has final jurisdiction, in one of the 982 judicial *mandamenti*, of controversies involving sums less than 500 lire, and who occasionally hears appeals from the conciliators; (3) in one of the 138 "tribunals," when larger amounts are involved; the tribunals also hear appeals from the decisions of the *pretore* where the amount exceeds 500 lire; and (4) in one of the 18 Courts of Appeal, in special cases of an extraordinary character; otherwise, the Courts of Appeal, as their name suggests, are concerned merely with hearing appeals from lower tribunals. The final court of appeal is the civil section of the Court of Cassation, to which recourse is occasionally had.

In a typical year, over 50 per cent of the civil cases are completely settled by conciliators; between them, the conciliators and praetors decide 80 per cent of the controversies. In 1935, a total of 1,343,906 cases were brought into the civil courts; of these, approximately one-half were settled by the parties before the stage of formal judgment was reached. Of the 686,304 remaining, 80 per cent were settled by conciliators and praetors. Only 4,058 survived to the stage of judgment by the Court of Cassation.⁹ These statistics suggest a busy judicial system, in which the courts seek, above all, to reconcile the interests of the parties short of the final and formal judicial sentence.

The procedure in penal cases, while different, is analogous. (1) The praetor has a jurisdiction comparable to that of the American justice of the peace or police magistrate. Of a total of 778,823 misdemeanors and crimes adjudicated in 1935, praetors were responsible for the disposition of 670,253. (2) Slightly more serious cases are taken directly to the penal sections of the tribunals, which also hear appeals from decisions of the praetors. (3) Major crimes and felonies are tried, in the first instance, by the Courts of Assize, found in 90 districts; the Courts of Assize draw their personnel from the tribunals and the Courts of Appeal, but function under special penal procedures. (4) Appeals from the tribunals and assizes are taken to the penal section of the Court of Cassation.

On various occasions, but most notably by the decree of December 30, 1923, the Fascist government obtained a blanket delegation of authority to rewrite the substantive provisions of the basic law codes of the regime. The important codes are six in number: (1) Civil Code, (2) Code of Civil Procedure, (3) Commerce Code, (4) Maritime Code, (5) Penal Code, and (6) Code of Penal Procedure. New Penal and Penal Procedure Codes were first announced on October 19, 1930, following over five years of preparatory labor by the Minister of Justice, Alfredo Rocco, with the assistance of the technicians in the Ministry of Justice, jurists and advocates, and professors of law faculties; only after two additional years of study had been given to Rocco's "preliminary project" were the final codes promulgated. Similar care is now being used to produce the new Civil and Civil Procedure Codes, under the auspices of the Minister of Justice, Solmi. Care in their preparation has not prevented the Italian codes from serving as targets for the criticism of the liberal, foreign press; care was not intended to provide law codes suitable for the administration of abstract justice, but for the administration of Fascist justice. Juries and other procedural guarantees of personal liberty have been abolished as dilatory and unnecessary, inasmuch as judges are always presumed to have an interest in protecting persons accused of crime and, moreover, because the regime regards the attainment of its political and special objectives as considerations far outweighing the "democratic" rights of individuals. In their substantive provisions, the new codes seek to protect: (1) the social policy of the regime by safeguarding the "sanctity of the home"; (2)

the economic policy by laying heavy penalties upon strikes and lockouts; and (3) the political security of the regime by redefining and punishing more heavily acts affecting adversely the security of the State.

NOTES

1. However, an occasional decree-law lapses for failure to enact the "conversion law" within two years; see *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Apr. 28, 1933, no. 105, announcing the lapse of two decree-laws; *ibid.*, Dec. 11, 1933, no. 291, announcing the lapse of another. These are exceptional announcements. Incidentally, the government is not always scrupulous to present decree-laws before the third ensuing meeting of the chamber; such carelessness appears to have no effect upon the force given to the measure in question.
2. Data concerning the XXVIII Legislature, from *Annuario statistico italiano*, 1936, p. 247; data concerning the XXIX Legislature, from *Compendio statistico italiano*, 1936, p. 233.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 247 and 232, respectively.
4. For details, see H. R. Spencer, *Government and Politics of Italy*, pp. 164-172, Yonkers, 1932.
5. The Chamber of Deputies meets in the Palazzo Montecitorio, off Piazza Colonna in Rome, adjoining the Palazzo Chigi (the Foreign office and, at that time, Mussolini's headquarters).
6. Formal aspects of the procedure are illustrated by the royal decree of January 19, 1934, no. 7, dissolving the XXVIII Legislature and calling new elections:

"Article 1. The Chamber of Deputies is dissolved.

"Article 2. The national confederations of legally recognized syndical associations, referred to in Article 47 of the electoral law, and the associations and institutions referred to in the royal decree of October 26, 1933, no. 1516, will proceed to propose candidates within their competency before February 15, 1934-XII, depositing the necessary documents with the secretariat of the Fascist Grand Council before 4 P. M. of that day.

"Article 3. The Unified National [electoral] College is convoked for March 25, 1934-XII, to approve the list of deputies-designate prepared by the Grand Council.

"Article 4. The Senate of the Kingdom and the Chamber of Deputies are convoked for April 28, 1934-XII."
7. Eligible to vote are all male citizens over twenty-one (and married fathers between eighteen and twenty-one) who satisfy one of four formal qualifications. This is substantially universal male suffrage: under the census of April 21, 1931, there were 11,453,665 men over twenty-one in the kingdom; at the end of that year, the registered voters totaled 10,361,679. The number of registered voters increased to 10,527,608 by the time of the 1934 election.
8. S. Panunzio, *Rivoluzione e costituzione*, p. 78, Milan, 1933.
9. Preliminary data supplied for 1935 by the Ministry of Justice, in *Compendio statistico italiano*, 1936, p. 223.

Chapter VII

THE CORPORATIVE STATE: IDEAS AND PROBLEMS

"The Fascist State is 'corporative,' or else it is not 'Fascist.'"

—Benito Mussolini, October 1, 1930

1. INTRODUCTION

Paralleling its political and constitutional reconstruction is the remaking of the economic life of Fascist Italy along the lines of the "corporative" state. The economic aspect of the program of Fascism is as fundamental as any other—this Mussolini frequently reiterates: "The syndical-corporative organization . . . is the cornerstone of the Fascist State, and the creation which gives 'originality' to our Revolution. . . . These organizations are inseparable from the Regime, because they identify it, differentiate it, distinguish it from all others."¹ It is a natural consequence of the totalitarian conception of the state (although non-Fascist writers have reached the same conclusion), that politics and economics should be viewed as inseparable, that man in his political aspect should be identified with man in his economic aspect. Giuseppe Bottai, a former Minister of Corporations, thus expressed these views in 1930: "The citizen as pure citizen, the producer as pure producer, are abstractions: the concrete form is the citizen-producer, the ethical-political entity which includes the economic-social substance—the complete and total man."² It is hardly surprising, however, that in the emergent pattern of the corporative state the role of the "citizen-consumer" is defined in terms of *political stewardship operating from above*.³

The corporative state may briefly be defined as the institutional device for regimenting and controlling the agencies of national production—conceived in the broadest sense—in the interests of strong national policy, or *Weltpolitik*. Guiding and powering the machinery of the corporative state, and as vital to the general conception as the machinery itself, is the corporative principle, *corporativismo*. By this is understood the complex

of policies, objectives, and tactics which gives direction to the corporative state at a given moment. Since 1926, when first launched, the institutions of the corporative state have been constantly changing, developing, evolving; but the corporative principle has been relatively unimpaired. The continuing principle has greater importance than the temporary and changing machinery. For example, the basic mechanism of the corporative state is presumably the system of "corporations;" but, in practice, the corporations did not come to life until 1934-1935. Nevertheless, and the full implications of this seeming paradox must be appreciated, the peculiar political pressures exerted by the Fascist Party and the administrative agencies of the Ministry of Corporations caused effect to be given to the corporative *principle* even before the corporations were formed. From this it may be deduced that the corporations are formal institutions, that their creation in 1934-1935 did not materially affect the economic policies which took form in earlier years; and that, for some time to come, the corporations may have little actual contact with economic life. In other words, the corporative principle may be imagined without the corporations.⁴ Regimentation and control of productive forces, in the interest of national policy, was thus realized in Italy a decade ago.

The artificial and distinctive meaning which Fascists have placed upon the term "corporation" (*corporazione*) has nothing in common with its meaning in Anglo-Saxon usage. The United States Steel Corporation has a moral and legal personality, enjoying an autonomy, and a capacity to sue and to be sued on the basis of its charter. The name conjures visions of smokestacks and sweating workmen, of shareholders, directors, managers, and balance sheets, of munitions, steel rails and bridge girders. The Steel (or Metallurgical) Corporation in Italy is none of these things: it is an *administrative agency* of the State which brings together, in a council, the individuals designated by the government to "represent" various phases in the process of extracting and processing ores, of manufacturing and distributing metal products. It has no autonomous existence, but meets at the call of State authorities; it has no actual legislative or regulatory power, but merely advises the government in its regulation of the metallurgical industry—to the end that

the ambitions of the government for the Italian steel industry may be colored by practical considerations, and that its program for the industry, when formulated, will be placed in operation. Whether all these things happen is another question. But from the nature of an Italian corporation, one may understand how other agencies and devices might be made to perform the same functions in the interest of *corporativismo*.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CORPORATE STATE

A basic objective of the corporative state has been to create as self-sufficient an Italian economy as possible. Such a goal appears palpably absurd, in view of Italy's lack of important raw materials, but Italian autarchy is guided by military requirements. Mussolini has admitted the impossibility of absolute economic independence, because of the raw-material deficiency, but: "This explains our conviction that Italy can and must attain the maximum level of economic independence in peace, and more especially in war. Italy's economic activities must all be directed with a view to meeting this supreme requirement: the future of the Italian people depends upon it."⁵ From the admission that Italy must import raw materials, it follows that the corporative state cannot withdraw entirely from the channels of world trade. The eminent Italian economist, Giorgio Mortara, has explained the reasons:

It may be said that nature has made it impossible for Italy to isolate herself economically. The greater part of her territory is mountainous and the land is not very productive. The subsoil is poor. The population is dense. In these circumstances we are obliged to seek considerable quantities of raw materials and foodstuffs from foreign countries. In order to pay for our imports, we have to export our national products, and if we want foreign markets to remain open to our products, we have to avoid excessive protectionism.⁶

Fascist Italy does not regard the shortcomings of her natural resources with complacency. Foreign trade and economic contact become a necessary evil, to be tolerated while attempts are made to attain the goal of autarchy. Thus, despite the poor prospect, the corporative state seeks to reclaim and improve agricultural lands (the *bonifica integrale*); to produce, in greater quantity, the essential foodstuffs (the "battle of the grain"); to redistribute the populations in order to accelerate the economic transition (the Commissariat for Migration and Internal Coloni-

zation); to seek ways and means of developing domestic resources and of gearing up the rate of industrial production. Chemists seek to develop *ersatz* products, and the discovery that cloth can be manufactured from milk (casein) is welcomed as evidence that the economic ambitions of the regime are not unfounded. As the production of bananas increases in Italian Somalia, a "banana monopoly" is formed to cultivate in Italy a taste for that tropical fruit and thus to make Italy less dependent upon foreign foodstuffs. Anti-Fascist critics, taking note of the tremendous complexity of the problem, suggest that the regime acts as it does with a knowing tongue in cheek, that Fascist regimentation is the recourse of "the capitalist class when the threat of the working class to the stability of monopoly capitalism becomes acute." But the same kind of program might be followed, in good faith, by a nation which feared war or was preparing for it, by a nation desirous of establishing the economic basis for international political prestige and influence, or by a nation anxious to improve a low living standard.

As the difficulty of objective is perceived, regimentation and control become more intensive. The *laissez-faire* theory is repudiated, and with it all conceptions of economic freedom. The Labor Charter of 1927 admitted the right of private property in principle, but reserved to the State the power to intervene, direct, manage, or operate property when its own interests required. Although labor is "permitted [actually required] to organize" in peculiar, nonrepresentative, state-sponsored syndicates, its organization may never be used to delay the productive process by strikes. For the same reason, proprietors' syndicates are estopped from using the lockout. The Fascist conception of the totalitarian state, which admits of no limitations upon its scope and functions, and which destroys categorical distinctions between politics and economics, is entirely antipathetical to the "liberal" doctrine of *laissez faire*. Mussolini and his satellites vie with each other in depicting the collapse of a decadent "capitalism," in proclaiming the world economic crisis to be one of system and not *in* system, in declaring: "We are now burying economic liberalism."⁸

Capitalism is derided in Italy as in the Soviet Union, but for different reasons. ~~To Communists, capitalism is the economic order in which the labor of the working class is unmercifully~~

exploited for private profit; if labor is to succeed in the class war, it must take from the bourgeoisie the instrument of its will, private property. To Fascists, on the other hand, capitalism is rejected whenever the free play of private property and initiative tend to impair the economic program of the political leaders of the state, and to substitute private motive and profit for the welfare of the sacrosanct state. Communists would end the class war by abolishing property; Fascists would strengthen the state by taking advantage of the initiative of private capital, but subjecting it to strict control, supervision, and direction, so that it becomes an instrument of the state. So substantial are the limitations under which private property and capital are exercised in Italy, that the conception of "capitalism" is avowedly destroyed and replaced by *corporativismo*. The reality of the Fascist assertion depends largely upon the nature of capitalism, and the place of property in its system. Beyond what point may state regulation of property go without affecting the capitalist *system*? How far may the state be brought into the capitalist cycle without destroying it? These were questions which J. A. Hobson sought to answer by saying:

My contention is that this new State-capitalism cannot establish itself as a durable institution because of an inherent contradiction in its structure and working. It wants to do two incompatible things, to organize and keep in full activity the new and ever-growing powers of production which modern science places at the disposal of industry, while at the same time retaining substantially unchanged the distribution of income and property proceeding from the profit system.⁹

Yet it is a fact that Fascist Italy imposes, with each passing year, more stringent limitations upon property and profit; business returns to government a greater proportion of its earnings, in some cases approaching confiscation; freedom in the investment of profits is steadily proscribed.

The proper emphasis to be placed upon anticapitalism in the corporative scheme is a subject widely discussed among Fascist economists. Uncertain of its own policies, the government tolerates differences of opinion between the Fascist "conservatives" and "radicals," hoping that acceptable and useful suggestions may emerge from the discussion. The "radicals" are at present in the minority. Their spokesman, Professor

Ugo Spirito, has, however, issued a provoking challenge. He is certain that with the collapse of capitalism the general orientation of the economic system of the future must be either in the Fascist or in the Communist direction. Naturally, he maintains that the Fascist alternative must prevail. But, according to Spirito, success will come "not to that one of the two regimes which will have denied the other, but to that one of the two which will be able to incorporate and surpass the other in a more extreme form."¹⁰ Interpreting Article VII of the Labor Charter ("Private organization of production being a function of national concern, the proprietor of an enterprise is responsible to the State"), Spirito argues that under the corporative state the most extreme forms of control and direction should be adopted. This opens for discussion the question: Will the present non-Marxian state Socialism of the corporative state yield to a form of non-Marxian Communism? Theoretically, the conception of the totalitarian state is broad enough to encompass the most extreme Communism.

3. PROBLEMS AND TECHNIQUES

Corporative economy remains in a highly experimental stage. Active experimentation is conducted with increasing awareness of the complexity of the question in its larger aspects. An examination of the conditions fundamental to the success of corporativismo, and of progress made toward the attainment of each, will reveal far more about the practical operation of the corporative system than the study of the formal structure of the corporations:

A. First, and fundamental to a scheme of national autarchy, there must exist a plan in the sense of a rational conception of immediate and distant objectives, accompanied by measures of economic coordination directed to those ends. In 1932, Alberto de Stefani, Mussolini's first Finance Minister, stated that the corporative system foreshadowed "a new order in which the distribution of labour and of capital, as well as the system of production, will be planned in advance and as a whole on the basis of a knowledge of every need."¹¹ Accepting the assurances of Fascist economists that they proceeded from a plan, Professor Goldschmidt examined the corporative system in

actual practice. He concluded that planning existed only in a negative and restrictive sense: "Growing net consumption, growing debts, and growing burden result in the opposite of a planned economy. *The consequence is centralized anarchic bankruptcy.*"¹² On the basis of the evidence available when he wrote in 1934, Professor Goldschmidt was justified in his conclusion. Since that time, however, several important developments in the planning field have materialized in Italy.

1. Over a long period, Fascists professed a distaste for all forms of planning *à la Russe*. Political conditions made it desirable to avoid the example set by the hated Communists. Moreover, there was a feeling that the Communist plans were too doctrinaire and unrealistic, that they were "political manifestoes, and not economic papers."¹³ Recently the Communist stigma has been removed from plans measured in terms of years. Nazi Germany has announced a Four-Year Plan; Japan aspires to inaugurate a Five-Year Plan in Manchukuo; and even Italy defined, in June, 1937, a Six-Year Plan for East Africa. The Fascist sense of opportunism and expediency, which normally balks at written promises for the future, may find it consistent, before long, to publish a specific plan for Italy.

2. Almost unconsciously, planning agencies have come to be developed on a large scale in Italy. From one point of view, the institutions of the corporative state are almost exclusively advisory and planning institutions. The councils of the various corporations (and their subcommittees) meet with increasing frequency to discuss plans for the development and coordination of economic activities within their respective categories. The Central Corporative Committee has given formal approval to proposals emanating from the corporation councils and, in addition, adopts resolutions intended to guide and direct their planning work. Perhaps of greater significance is the *de facto* concentration of first-rate economic talent which is now found in the technical offices of the Ministry of Corporations, in the National Research Council, and, more particularly, in the Permanent Price Control Committee of the Fascist Party.¹⁴ While they exist, and perform a definite function within narrow limits, the planning agencies have yet to be integrated and coordinated before the corporative state can proceed very far beyond its present stage.

3. Mussolini first touched seriously upon the subject of "plan" in his important address of March 23, 1936. At that time he referred to future expectations in industry, agriculture, commerce, and finance, emphasizing, however, not so much a concrete program of production as the extent and degree to which he expected those categories to be brought under government control and domination. Like almost all Fascist proclamations on the subject, his dealt with forms, not with substance. More significant was the address delivered before the Assembly of the Corporations on May 15, 1937, in which Mussolini traced the economic progress of Italy in the intervening fourteen months. He redefined the objective of the Fascist plan as "the maximum of economic autarchy for the nation, the necessary presupposition and the fundamental guarantee of its political independence and power." For the first time he began to cite statistics: the production of coal, approximating 1,000,000 tons in 1936-1937, marked progress toward a goal of 4,000,000 tons; the production of manganese, amounting to 7,000 tons in 1934, was expected to reach a total of 100,000 tons in 1937-1938 and to increase, ultimately, to over 350,000 tons annually; aluminum production had increased from 14,000 tons to 20,000, with a goal of 40,000 tons in sight. He had been assured that Italy would attain autonomy in the production of petroleum products by the end of 1938, on the basis of Albanian resources and improved refining methods. Without mentioning figures, he went on to speak of plans for the production of iron and nickel, of increased production of meats and fats, and of progress in a dozen other specific fields. The entire speech was marked by a new tone and by unusually concrete reference to definite problems of Italian economy. It may very well signal the opening of the final phase in the development of Fascist planning technique.

B. Vital to the accomplishment of any plan, written or unwritten, is control over adequate sources of raw materials. Success cannot possibly be had for autarchic *corporativismo* unless the state is in a position to control all the factors which enter into the national economy. Plans may be controlled in their formation and adjustment to conditions; the price of labor may be set within limits; prices may be set so long as political organization retains its vitality; national credit, in so far as it exists, may be even more easily controlled and directed into

appropriate channels. Raw materials, however, cannot be regulated when imported except in the negative sense of restriction or exclusion. The state may create special agencies to promote the importation of required commodities, but where the source of the supply depends upon a commercial treaty or political arrangement it is notoriously unreliable. Where inventive genius and chemical talent prevail, some deficiencies may be supplied by *ersatz* industries. Increasing awareness of the need of controlling agricultural raw materials, such as cotton and rubber, and industrial raw materials, such as petroleum and other minerals, was the factor which did more than any other single thing to turn Italy's thoughts to Ethiopia. Mussolini's words require no elaboration: "Let it be said for once and for all, that the problem of raw materials should not be considered from the point of view of those liberal economists who accepted as dogma the perpetual inferiority of Italy, which they summarized in the over-emphasis commonplace of her poverty in raw materials. Let us rather say that Italy lacks *some* raw materials, a lack which is one of the fundamental reasons for her colonial demands. . . ."¹⁶ Expectations from Ethiopia were, and are, far more optimistic than reality warrants, but Italy will look to East Africa as a raw-material reservoir until the contrary is demonstrated. The Ethiopian campaign illustrated the basic dilemma and contradiction of Fascist Italy's economic aspirations: the corporative state, which exists that Italy may be more secure in the event of war, makes war to obtain that security inevitable!

C. Finance oils the wheels of production. Control over all forms of fixed and liquid capital must be maintained in proportion as property and capital are viewed as instruments of the State. This problem has been solved with more ease than any other. Banks and other credit institutions are required to make available capital as the State dictates, and under the terms and conditions prescribed. Government intervention in this field is so strong that credit institutions cannot call their resources their own. In March, 1936, to increase financial control, all banks were given status as "institutions of *public law*," and to an increasing degree their policies are directed by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Corporations, and the Fascist Party. If, in the interest of corporate production, the

government calls for an expansion of plant, say, in the textile field, and provision is made for the needed adjustment and coordination, then no bank will examine the accounts of an enterprise which approaches it in search of funds. Credit institutions must accommodate themselves to the government fiat. Their only guarantee lies in the knowledge that the State cannot afford their collapse, that it will substitute government loans for doubtful credits, or will, in any event, underwrite the loan. Within the limits of the capital available, this procedure works effectively—so effectively, in fact, that by rediscounting bank loans, the government has become the largest creditor in Italy. Possession of such credit instruments places in the hands of the State its most potent device for compelling observance of its economic dictates.

Financial resources of the regime require, however, more than control of domestic sources; there must be an increase in capital supplied by domestic and foreign loans, or by a large program for the export of nonmilitary products. There can be no export from Italy of surplus capital or profits without government authority. As for Italian credits abroad, these are rigidly controlled and supervised by the Undersecretariat for Credit and Exchange, set up in 1935 and attached directly to the presidency of the Council of Ministers. The Undersecretariat regulates all Italian exports, to the end that it may have full knowledge of, and control over, all credit established abroad. Its facilities, as well as the elaborate tax-assessment system devised by the Ministry of Finance, make possible a complete "capital census" on the basis of which the corporative state may learn of the ultimate limit of its financial resources. If no other alternative is presented, the Fascist regime does not hesitate to employ the capital levy. The forced loan, to which all property owners were required to subscribe to the amount of at least 5 per cent of their property in October, 1936, was precisely such a levy in practice; special taxes were levied upon those who had "loaned" money to the government, requiring them to repay themselves. Many property owners took advantage of the alternative of presenting the necessary funds to the government without expectation of repayment. Avowedly, the loan was intended for Ethiopian development; but that device may be used for any further purpose. Needless to remark,

the propertied classes in Italy have lost much of whatever enthusiasm they may have had for Mussolini's Fascism. This is one of the reasons why Mussolini tends to look to the working classes for support, one of the explanations of a more intelligent labor policy.

D. Normally, the greatest threat to the controlled operation of the domestic economic machine is found in the supply and conditions of labor. In Italy it has become a function of the State, if not its essential function, to regulate relations between capital and labor, to prevent strikes and lockouts, to compensate labor sufficiently to prevent domestic disturbance and danger of revolt, to compensate capital sufficiently to warrant its continuing operation. Through its conciliating agencies and labor courts, the State insists upon the adjustment of capital-labor conflicts; through its penal law it punishes those who refuse. To prevent the formation of a labor consciousness, unauthorized doctrines (chiefly Marxist) are prohibited; the censorship which foreigners think chiefly political is conducted essentially with an economic objective in mind. The tables which follow will suggest the methods and results of the Fascist government's policy in the adjustment of labor controversies.

For the more effective regulation of economic relations, organizations of capital and labor, far from being prohibited, are made practically compulsory. The recognized syndicates and confederations of syndicates have the power of speaking definitively and authoritatively in the name of all persons, employers and employees, in their respective categories, whether the individuals are formal members of the syndicate or not. In accordance with the national scheme, capital and labor within the respective categories *must* adjust their differences (whether by conciliation or adjudication, whether collectively or individually) and provide for the definition of their powers, responsibilities, and interests in the instrument known as the *collective labor contract*. The collective labor contract is the real heart of the corporative program.¹⁶ Theoretically, a contract between employers and employees in a given category is to be established by negotiation on the part of their accredited representatives. In practice, since the terms of the contract must accord in all details with the national (government) program, the State maintains the strictest supervision over terms of the contracts and the conditions of

THE SETTLEMENT OF LABOR CONTROVERSIES IN ITALY

(*Compendio statistico italiano*, 1936, pp. 147-148)

1. Collective Controversies Conciliated by the Ministry of Corporations, 1935

CATEGORY	CONTROVERSIES			
	PRE-SENTED	CON-CILIATED	NOT CON-CILIATED	ABAN-DONED OR WITH-DRAWN
Agriculture.....	5	3	..	2
Industry.....	126	87	5	34
Commerce.....	9	5	..	4
Credit and Insurance.....	1	..	..	1
Professions and Arts.....	1	..	..	1
Total.....	142	95	5	42

2. Settlement of Individual Controversies

CATEGORY	DISPUTES SETTLED IN SYNDICAL CHANNELS		DISPUTES SETTLED IN JUDICIAL CHANNELS		TOTAL	
	1935	1934	1935	1934	1935	1934
Agriculture.....	61,971	57,345	4,228	4,786	66,199	62,131
Industry.....	63,959	64,936	9,643	9,482	73,602	74,418
Commerce.....	16,823	18,768	3,005	2,354	19,828	21,122
Credit and Insurance.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,271	2,018
Professions and Arts.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,332	3,113

3. Criminal Proceedings in Strikes and Lockouts*

YEAR	NUMBER OF STRIKES			NUMBER OF STRIKERS			LOCKOUTS	
	TOTAL	AGRI-CUL-TURE	INDUS-TRY	TOTAL	AGRI-CUL-TURE	INDUS-TRY	NUM-BER	PERSONS IN-DICTED
1930	75	9	66	2,830	201	2,629	7	33
1931	63	15	48	4,122	746	3,376	4	19
1932	21	7	14	593	280	313	2	5
1933	30	8	22	824	101	723	4	17
1934	32	2	30	545	100	445	6	31

* These are official statistics, given without comment. They do not include the "collective abstentions from work" which gave rise to no criminal indictment. Statistics relating to the actual number of persons found guilty are not available.

their enforcement. Nominally, representatives of the interests concerned make the agreement; actually, the terms of a particular contract are defined by the Fascist Party through its central Price Control Committee and, more important, through the Provincial Intersyndical Committee which it maintains in each province under the control of the Federal Secretary. The so-called "negotiation" between "representatives" of capital and labor takes place only when the Party is willing. In substantially every instance, the Party drafts the complete contract and submits it to the groups affected for their formal acceptance and signature.

Such collective labor contracts may be either (1) "type contracts," phrased in general terms and declaratory of general principles applicable in concrete situations, or (2) they may be, as is more frequently the case, specific contracts for a particular industry or branch of industry, replete with specific detail. Such contracts, whether general or specific, make provision for: (1) forms and terms of employment, including training, apprenticeship, and probationary periods; (2) terms and conditions of discharge, or suspension, and the various degrees of punishment (extending from layoff or fine to discharge) to which an employee may be subjected; (3) the hours and conditions of labor, including compensation for overtime, annual vacations, and rest days; (4) the wage scale, defined with minute precision for every type or quality of work performed, with provisions for wage increases or wage decreases according to a general formula; and (5) the agencies for settling individual or collective controversies arising from (a) the interpretation of obligations under the contract, or (b) "demands" for a revision of its terms—by agencies of syndical arbitration, or conciliation through the Ministry of Corporations, or adjudication by labor courts. Contracts generally run for a definite period of one or two years, but may be replaced, at any time, by "negotiation" between the parties or by governmental fiat. Contracts may be concluded on a purely local basis, but are found more generally on the provincial level; frequently, for economic activities extending beyond the provincial boundaries, the contracts may be concluded on an interprovincial or national scale.

The collective labor contract is the most real thing about the corporative state, even though there may be discrepancies

between the terms of a contract and the conditions under which it is enforced. Thousands of them have been concluded and given effect. It may be said that no branch of economic activity

COLLECTIVE LABOR CONTRACTS IN ITALY, 1926-1935*

YEAR	AGRICULTURE	INDUSTRY†	COMMERCE	CREDIT AND INSURANCE	PROFESSIONS	TOTAL
1. National and Interprovincial Collective Contracts						
a. Contracts Deposited						
1926 through 1930	17	145	53	66	0	281
1931.....	5	99	6	9	0	119
1932.....	2	103	10	46	5	166
1933.....	4	68	10	8	1	91
1934.....	5	182	21	6	1	215
1935.....	15	119	66	16	9	225
b. Contracts Officially Published						
1926 through 1930	8	82	42	57	0	89
1931.....	3	36	8	11	0	58
1932.....	4	89	1	42	3	139
1933.....	3	74	8	13	2	100
1934.....	4	96	14	2	1	117
1935.....	11	139	22	3	7	182
2. Provincial Collective Contracts						
a. Contracts Deposited						
1926 through 1930	1,029	5,278	875	74	0	7,256
1931.....	196	1,033	246	9	0	1,484
1932.....	222	1,111	153	20	11	1,517
1933.....	223	1,047	215	12	48	1,545
1934.....	202	935	302	35	30	1,504
1935.....	165	894	256	12	1	1,328
b. Contracts Officially Published						
1926 through 1930	443	1,773	417	41	0	2,674
1931.....	168	882	245	8	0	1,303
1932.....	113	961	122	37	11	1,244
1933.....	128	919	109	14	48	1,218
1934.....	195	994	225	8	29	1,451
1935.....	117	789	363	13	2	1,284

* Data, 1926-1930, inclusive, from *Annuario statistico italiano*, 1931, p. 216; data, 1931-1935, inclusive, from *Compendio statistico italiano*, 1936, p. 143.

† Includes contracts of earlier years concluded in the categories of Inland Transportation and Maritime Transportation.

exists in Italy which is not regulated, so far as capital-labor relations are concerned, by a collective contract. The collective contract is an ideal instrument for the purposes of the corporative state. It sets the standard of conduct for capital and labor, and also enables the government to give effect to its plan for any branch of activity. When, for example, the government desires the cheap production of a given product in order to increase exports, manufacturing costs may be reduced by a rewriting of the wage and hour scale in the collective contract. Fascism's solution to economic questions, during the first decade, was distinctly deflationary, and successive wage decreases were ordered; new contracts gave them immediate effect. More recently, the tendency has been in the opposite direction: in August, 1936, a wage increase approximating 8 to 10 per cent was ordered for nearly all branches of Italian economy, and in August and September hundreds of contracts were rewritten. Again, after the government had partially nullified these increases by its devaluation of the *lira* in October, 1936, another series of increases in wages ranging from 10 to 12 per cent was decreed on April 30, 1937. Whether capital or labor profits from a particular revision is sometimes difficult to ascertain, but the entire wage structure is under government control. Actually, the contracts are substantially enforced, as the jurisprudence of the labor courts appears to indicate. There is no point in tabulating the number of cases won by capital or labor, when controversies are settled in the courts, and for several reasons: (1) a single "collective" dispute settled to the advantage of capital may offset a hundred "individual" disputes settled to the advantage of labor; (2) again, labor appears to win the bulk of the "individual" disputes, for the reason that when a worker has been adversely affected by an employer's violation of the contract, he has no other alternative than to invoke an authorized procedure. On the other hand, when an employer is adversely affected by an unwarranted resignation of an employee, it is much easier for him to employ another worker than to bring a syndical action against an offender.

The freedom of movement of an individual worker is definitely restricted. His passport is his labor *libretto*, the booklet which contains the full record of his past employment activities, and without which he cannot obtain a new position. The *libretto*

THE COST OF LIVING IN ITALY, 1929-1937

(*Bollettino dei prezzi*, X, April 15, 1937, Ordinary Supplement, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, April 15, 1937, no. 88) (June 1, 1928 = 100)

MONTH	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
January.....	101.45	100.45	90.72	84.99	82.92	80.56	75.14	82.05	86.40
February.....	101.96	99.45	90.12	85.06	82.32	79.79	75.28	81.84	86.90
March.....	103.32	98.79	90.03	85.82	81.63	79.51	75.39	81.94	87.18
April.....	102.24	98.31	90.01	86.19	80.92	79.43	76.32	82.20	
May.....	101.53	97.46	89.38	85.42	80.26	75.21	76.74	83.50	§
June.....	101.49	97.55	88.95	84.97	80.41	74.39	77.28	83.84	
July.....	100.89	98.32	88.48	83.78	80.10	74.33	77.52	83.55	
August.....	99.75	97.47	87.37	82.10	79.17	74.10	77.23	83.11	
September....	99.73	97.23	86.61	81.89	79.57	74.29	77.47	83.54†	
October.....	100.12	97.28	86.22	82.43	79.58	74.53	79.38*	85.23‡	
November....	100.54	97.20	85.97	83.13	79.37	75.15	80.51	85.51	
December....	100.74	93.29	85.21	83.43	79.73	75.35	81.52	85.98	

* The Ethiopian campaign began October 3, 1935; ended May 9, 1936 (official).

† Upward revision of wage scales in effect, September, 1936.

‡ Devaluation of the lira, October 5, 1936.

§ Upward revision of wage scales ordered April 30, 1937.

more easily permits employers to maintain and enforce a black list. A worker who is notoriously difficult to handle may have his booklet withdrawn by the decision of the Party-controlled labor office, and thus find himself denied a future chance to obtain employment. Consequently, labor is made to toe the mark. Corresponding limitations are imposed upon the employer, but these are more nominal than real.

E. The complex economic program requires rigid control of all prices and trade practices—with attendant causes and effects in standards of living and in conditions of manufacture and distribution. Prices must bear a definite relation to wages, and vice versa. The most effective instrument for the control of prices has been the Fascist Party. Before October 5, 1936, its pressure in this field was largely political and extralegal: when a merchant refused to reduce the price of his stock under instruction, it was generally sufficient for a Party delegation to visit his shop and deliver its warning or threat. After October 5, 1936, the action of the Party became official: its Permanent Price Control Committee received authority to fix all wholesale and retail prices, and violation of its price structure, whether for clothing, cheese, macaroni, wine, automobiles, or other com-

modities, was punished by administrative and judicial agencies, as well as by political pressures.¹⁷ The price scale fixed by the Party is published monthly in the *Bollettino dei prezzi*, annexed to the *Gazzetta ufficiale*, and forthwith acquires the force of law. Evidence points to the general observance of the official standard.

The course of prices has been erratic in Italy. Comparisons with pre-Fascist Italy are difficult by reason of the two major changes which have occurred in the value of the *lira* and also because of the abnormality of the immediate postwar period. The preceding table shows the official index of the cost of living, which presumably is a gauge of the real value of wages in terms of the prevailing price level.

From the predepression high of 103.32 in March, 1929, the cost of living dropped to a low of 74.10 (August, 1934), rising fairly steadily thereafter. The test imposed by the Ethiopian campaign was met with fair satisfaction, and living costs rose but slightly; the rise after devaluation in October, 1936, largely nullified wage increases of August and September, and necessitated new increases in May, 1937.

* * *

Development of these special practices has created in Italy a distinctive type of economy which simply cannot be judged by the standards and criteria which prevail in capitalistic, laissez-faire economies. In a free economy, for example, it is possible to gauge the economic health of a working enterprise by its profit and loss record and by the relation of its debt to income. The same tests cannot be applied in the same way in Italy. If the tourist industry operates at an apparent loss, the government may be supplying capital and making up the deficit by subsidies and bonuses, often invisible—all because it has become necessary to encourage an influx of tourists to build up gold credits. If the automotive industry incurs debts far out of proportion to profits from the sales of automobiles, this may have been the result of a government edict which required the installation of munitions machineries and equipment. In dozens of other ways, private business is made entirely dependent upon the government and its current policies in many diverse fields. Private initiative and search for security no longer revolve around private industry so much as around the program of the regime: its unemployment

insurance, public works for unemployed workers, its support of the industrially injured, and other aspects of a wider social program. The transition to a regime as utterly distinctive from others as Fascists claim for it has not been completed in Italy—but the departure from the orthodox conception of capitalism appears to have been substantially achieved.

4. SOME SPECIAL ASPECTS OF ITALIAN ECONOMY

In evaluating the distinctiveness of the corporative state, account must be taken of several circumstances which distinguish Italian economy from the economies of other major Western powers.

① While Italian life has traditionally been more urban in outlook than that of France, the bulk of Italian economic interest is still centered in agriculture. Here Italy resembles France more closely than Great Britain or Germany. Unlike the French peasant, however, the Italian peasant is far more likely to be a tenant farmer, operating under the *mezzadria* system, and not caring greatly whether his economic burdens are imposed by the State or by his landlord. The French farmer, on the other hand, has a keen sense of property, in the ownership of his small farm, and a natural resentment of any form of external economic control, whether imposed by the banking capitalist or the government bureaucrat. The French peasant lent tolerant support to the Left-wing government of M. Blum, but solely because, under the pressure of the recent crisis, the French banking interests began to dominate agriculture; he was willing to allow a Socialist to recoup his losses for him. The pressure of the Fascist regime, in the agricultural sphere, is felt directly by the larger landowner, and indirectly by the tenant. Moreover, the commercial and middle class in Italy is narrower, and the larger agricultural proletariat, still relatively uneducated, is politically less articulate than the corresponding class in France.

② Italian economy is, on the whole, less self-sufficient than French or German economy. More like the British, Italians have learned to think in terms of foreign exports and foreign markets; but, unlike the British, they are more concerned with the exportation of agricultural produce. Italian agricultural economy does not so immediately feel the repercussions of a

new trade policy. Hence, in this sphere, there may be more experimentation, more tentative action, without adverse effects being appreciated over a short period of time.

③ The industrial revolution came to Italy after the political unification, but developed less rapidly than in Germany, where a similar transition was occurring. Industrialization in Italy has not yet advanced so far, is more generally decentralized in ownership and control, and is less subject to the economic laws of supermonopoly capitalism. Hitler encountered little difficulty in manipulating a highly monopolized industrial economy, where control centered in somewhat fewer hands than in Italy. In practice, a government strongly intent upon regulating industry finds that its task is more easily accomplished when economic concentration has reached a high point. To produce results, pressure need be exerted at relatively few points in the economic structure. Mussolini has therefore not been so favorably situated as was Hitler to conduct a thorough regimentation. For the same reason, the corporative state is not so likely to be a vehicle commanded by monopoly capitalists.

④ There are, however, two features of the limited Italian industrial economy which work to Mussolini's advantage. In the first place, although monopolistic control has not been carried so far as elsewhere, Italian industries are geographically centered in an area of small radius in the Po Valley. Control pressures exerted in a few strategic localities may produce important and immediate results, even though not felt elsewhere. Secondly, Italian industry has not yet developed to the point where its character is permanently fixed. This results not only from the newness of industry, but also from the fact that Italian industry is not concerned so much with the working of raw materials immediately at hand as with materials imported from abroad. Italy is not, for example, obliged to construct her industries around iron and coal, because of these commodities she has little. At the same time, Italians possess a technical and inventive skill of high order, particularly in the mechanical field. Hence, it becomes more feasible for the regime to attempt the transformation of Italian industry by the restriction of imports, trusting Italian technology to perform the necessary adjustments in the mechanical and manufacturing processes. This flexibility, again, permits a wider range of experimentation.

NOTES

1. Speech before the Assembly of the National Council of Corporations, October 1, 1930. Whether a non-Italian movement described as "Fascist" is actually Fascist depends largely upon its acceptance of the corporative idea. For example, only Marcel Bucard's *Francistes* are admitted into the sessions of the Fascist International, although other French organizations are described as Fascist. See *Comités d'Action pour l'Universalité de Rome, Réunion de Montreux, 16-17 décembre 1934-XIII*, Rome, 1935.
2. "Stato corporativo e democrazia," *Lo stato*, April, 1930, reprinted in his *Esperienza corporativa* (1929-1934), p. 89, Florence, 1935.
3. The discerning reader of these pages will be careful to distinguish the exposition of government doctrine and the explanation of formal institutions, on the one hand, from actual practice. Certain basic principles are to be borne in mind: (1) Hierarchy, or direction and control from the top, is as applicable in the corporative sphere as elsewhere, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding; (2) nothing in the State escapes the searching control and vigilant supervision of the Fascist Party; (3) such formal terms as "election," "representation," "equality," "negotiation," etc., must be read with the Fascist preconception concerning such terms in mind; (4) statistics, except where noted, are all official, and the complexities and ramifications of the system make difficult independent verification.
G. Salvemini's *Under the Axe of Fascism*, New York, 1936, although written with distinct animus, presents material which is indispensable to the formation of a judgment on certain practical aspects of the corporative system; the best noncritical exposition of Fascist economics, in its formal sense, is F. Pitigliani, *The Italian Corporative State*, New York, 1934.
4. Critics of the Fascist regime, taking advantage of the carelessness of writers who described the paper corporations as actually in existence before 1934, have often identified the absence of the corporations with the absence of the corporative principle. The conclusion does not follow the premise.
5. Speech of March 23, 1936.
6. League of Nations, International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation, *A Record of a First International Study Conference on the State and Economic Life*, pp. 67-68, Paris, 1932.
7. J. Strachey, *The Coming Struggle for Power*, p. 261, New York, 1933.
8. Mussolini, Speech of November 14, 1933.
9. J. A. Hobson, *Democracy and a Changing Civilization*, pp. 47-48, London, 1934.
10. Spirito, "Individuo e stato nella concezione corporativa," in *Atti del secondo convegno di sindacali e corporativi*, Ferrara, 5-8 maggio 1932, vol. 1, pp. 181 ff., 191, Rome, 1932. Salvemini has said: "Mussolini, with his exceptional demagogic perspicacity, does not discourage this kind of speculation. . . . At the opportune moment the right-wing

Fascists disappear and the left-wing Fascists come to the front." *Under the Aze of Fascism*, pp. 371-372.

11. *The State and Economic Life*, cited, p. 30.
12. "Theories and Types of Planning," in M. Van Vleek and M. Fleddéus (eds.), *On Economic Planning*, pp. 29, 32, New York, 1935.
13. Bottai, *Esperienza corporativa*, cited, pp. 219-222.
14. Interviews at the Ministry of Corporations and the Party headquarters impressed the present writer with the large number of young economists who seemed genuinely concerned in making the corporative state work. This comment is necessary to correct any impression that intelligent economists are boycotting the system; apart from public service, there is little outlet for professionally trained economists in Italy. These administrators inject an element of rationality into the system, and do much to avoid the errors implicit in the more exotic aspects of corporative theory.
15. Speech of March 23, 1936.
16. This does not mean that the Fascists invented the collective labor contract; but they have probably brought its formation under more effective public control than elsewhere. Collective labor contracts exist in the United States in agreements between labor unions and industrial operators.
17. R. D.-L. no. 1747, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Oct. 5, 1936, no. 231. On April 16, 1937, the Council of Ministers approved a proposed decree-law providing for the transfer of this function from the Party to the Corporative Central Committee and the Provincial Corporative Councils (*Popolo d'Italia*, Apr. 17, 1937). However, it is not anticipated that the Party will lose any of its interest after the change formally takes place.

Chapter VIII

THE CORPORATIVE STATE: INSTITUTIONS

Among the organs of the corporative state there may be distinguished three major classifications. First are those which developed with respect to, and in terms of, categories of capital and labor, organized as syndicates and confederations on local, provincial, regional (interprovincial), and national lines. In the second place, there are found the organs, primarily administrative, which are concerned with the coordination and control of the economic machinery of the state: the corporations, the Ministry of Corporations, and the institutions related to them. And, since the conception of the corporate state is broad enough to encompass all the other organs and institutions of the state which operate in the economic sphere, mention must be made of agencies not included in the first two classifications, such as the Fascist Party, the land-reclamation agencies, and the social-insurance institutions. These classifications are adopted solely for descriptive purposes, and the organs included within each do not function independently or without participation in the work of the others. All phases and by-products of the economic process are theoretically synthesized in the corporative state.

1. ORGANIZATIONS OF CAPITAL AND LABOR

Notwithstanding its increments and modifications of detail, the basic legislation on the Fascist syndicates has remained substantially unchanged in principle since the enactment of the law of April 3, 1926. Before that date, organizations of capital and labor flourished in Italy in many different forms—and lack of unity, indeed, was the chief characteristic of organization in that period. Capital had its chambers of commerce, manufacturers' associations, and associations of landed proprietors. Labor was even more thoroughly divided between three competing types of unions: syndicalists, in the Sorel tradition, Socialists in the Marxist tradition, and confederationists, in the younger

tradition of the Catholic Church. As the political strength of Fascism grew, it could not, did not, escape the inevitable concomitance of modern revolutionary activity: the desire to establish a broader base by allying itself with workers' organizations. The same phenomenon occurred in Germany, where the National Socialist Party formed its labor units to compete with Marxist unions. After several abortive attempts, Mussolini joined his forces with those of the Italian syndicalists under Edmondo Rossoni, which became Fascist syndicates early in 1922. The law of 1926 was designed to provide for the recognition of the Fascist syndicates and the definition of their place in the new State order, legalizing their monopoly now that the Marxist and church unions had been dispersed by the Black Shirts. But while Fascism had a labor basis before 1926, that basis was as insecure as it was artificial.

Economic class lines are maintained throughout the syndical system. Only proprietors or employees are eligible to affiliate, as the case may be, with the capital or labor groups. Legal recognition is granted to a capital or labor syndicate when, with the proprietors' syndicate, the members employ at least 10 per cent of the workers in the field, and, with the workers' syndicate, when its membership includes at least 10 per cent of the workers in the occupational line. The territorial boundaries of the syndicate may be, at one extreme, the commune, and at the other extreme, the entire nation, with the intermediate possibility of provincial and interprovincial organization. Once recognized, the syndicate enjoys the right of speaking in the name of all persons in that occupation, and in the same area, whether they have joined or not. Not only does the syndicate speak for nonmembers, but it also collects obligatory financial contributions from them. Collection of the contributions is made in accordance with an elaborate set of regulations:¹ the amount is fixed, for proprietors, by a formula which considers the value of their investment, the amount of their business, and size of their profits; the workers' contributions are in proportion to wages.

Practical considerations make it impossible to conceive of voluntary or independent labor organizations in Italy. In the first place, the vigorous Fascist organization drive of 1922-1926 produced an official Fascist syndicate in nearly every line of

economic activity. Since the official syndicate has a monopoly in its field, there is no opportunity to agitate for the recognition of another competing, or non-Fascist, syndicate, even though 10 per cent or more of the workers might make evident their desire to affiliate with an "independent." Secondly, as occasion arises for the formation of syndicates in fields not previously organized, only that association which meets with Party approval will be granted recognition. As might be expected, the Party assumes active responsibilities in this direction and effectively discourages any unauthorized initiative. The theoretical possibilities of a "free" labor movement actually become mythical.

Theoretically, the capital and labor syndicates are "representative" associations, which elect their own officers (a president, in the case of employers' syndicates, a secretary in the case of employees' syndicates) and governing councils. All such "elections," however, are subject to the confirmation of the Minister of Corporations, and in practice the minister or the officers of the Fascist Party designate the persons who are to hold the responsible positions. Neither the employers' nor the employees' syndicates can be said to have an autonomous sphere of action independent of the will of the government.

The original intention was to form separate syndicates for capital and labor in six major economic categories, in addition to a single syndicate for professional workers. From 1926 until 1934, 13 national "Fascist Confederations" functioned in accordance with that principle, each speaking for and representing all of the local and provincial syndicates in the following fields: (1) Industry, (2) Agriculture, (3) Commerce, (4) Internal Communication, (5) Maritime Transportation, (6) Credit and Insurance, and (7) Professions and Arts.

On the basis of this division into 13 confederations, the syndical groups participated in the election of the Chamber of Deputies in 1929 and 1934. By 1934, however, the Internal Communication and Maritime Transportation confederations (four in all) proved unworthy of separate status, and their member federations were united with those in industry, reducing the number of national confederations from 13 to 9. Each national confederation combines, in a single organization, the national federations which operate in the same broad field. For example, the National Fascist Confederation of Industrialists, the most important

organization of industrial proprietors, will consist of a number of national federations separately constituted for public utility proprietors, clothing manufacturers, automobile manufacturers, and others. The local and provincial syndicates are hardly more than branch offices of the national federations, and have lost their autonomy. In those borderline cases where it is difficult to tell whether the activity should be classified as commercial, industrial, or agricultural, the Minister of Corporations decides upon the correct classification, a practice which has produced some amusing and harmless anomalies.

The following table shows the organization and membership of the nine major categories:

NATIONAL FASCIST CONFEDERATIONS, DECEMBER 31, 1935
(*Compendio statistico italiano*, 1936, p. 142)*

CLASSIFICATION	NATIONAL CONFEDERATIONS	CONSTITUENT NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS		LOCAL SYN- DI- CATES	MEMBER- SHIP ON DEC. 31, 1935	MEMBER- SHIP ON DEC. 31, 1930
		FEDERATIONS	SYNDICATES			
Employers:						
Agriculture.....	1	4		.....	845,171	492,489
Industry.....	1	45		.....	457,835	95,089
Commerce.....	1	37		.....	550,829	454,088
Credit and Insurance.....	1	13	...	.....	8,571	8,314
Total.....	4	99		.....	1,862,406	1,049,980
Employees:						
Agriculture.....	1	4	...	.....	2,197,199	1,322,700
Industry.....	1	20	9†	.....	2,204,275	1,838,039
Commerce.....	1	5	...	.....	404,495	287,485
Credit and Insurance.....	1	4		.....	45,755	20,315
Professions and Arts.....	1	..	22	1,028	121,553	92,425
Total.....	5	33	31	1,028	4,973,227	3,560,964

* For further statistical data, see Istituto Nazionale Fascista di Cultura, *Legislazione e ordinamento sindacale corporativo*, 1934, Rome, 1935.

† Various crafts in the theater and entertainment field are organized as national syndicates, instead of as federations.

Since 1926, the syndicates have steadily declined in importance in the corporative scheme. The original intention, as expressed in the royal decree of July 1, 1926, was to create in each of the seven basic categories a corporation which would serve as an instrument to coordinate the two confederations (capital and labor, respectively) in industry, agriculture, commerce, inland communications, maritime and air transport, and credit and insurance. In the professional field the confederation of professional syndicates was alone to constitute the corporation. Thus, out of 13 confederations were to be created 7 corporations, working under the direction of the Ministry of Corporations. *This plan was at no time realized in practice*, although many writers described the seven corporations as going concerns.² It was early discovered that the tentative organization of all Italian economy along seven basic occupational lines was, in fact, no organization whatever, inasmuch as the bulk of Italian economic interest centers in agriculture and industry. A reclassification of agriculture and industry into their component parts was necessary; equally necessary was the absorption of the inland transportation and maritime and air transportation classifications into some other. It was also realized that capital and labor, alone, could not constitute a corporation, and that there was need for integrating the work of the Fascist Party, the technicians, and the "cooperatives" and other forms of economic activity. When the corporations were actually created, the syndical organizations played an important, but no longer exclusive, part.

Even though the present corporations differ from those originally intended, the syndicates continue to perform important functions, or rather, continue to serve as channels through which government policy is enforced. The collective labor contracts are still negotiated in the name of the syndicates and confederations; a "representation" from the syndicates is included in the membership of the corporations; and the syndical agencies still serve as primary agencies for the "conciliation" of disputes between capital and labor.

2. CORPORATIVE INSTITUTIONS

A. *The Corporations*

Solution of the problem of appropriately building the syndicates into the new economic structure was found in the device of

the "category" corporation. The system of category corporations is based upon the law of February 5, 1934. Without indicating the exact number of corporations to be created, the law authorized the Head of the Government to issue decrees, after consultation with the Corporative Central Committee and the Minister of Corporations, specifying their number, their membership, and their particular functions. The actual corporations, then, rest upon the flexible basis of decree, and may be changed from time to time, as occasion warrants. During the course of 1934, 22 decrees were issued, each instituting a single corporation, and on November 10, 1934, the persons designated by the Head of the Government to serve on the councils of the 22 category corporations were assembled for the first time.³

The principle of "vertical" organization prevails in the construction of a single corporation. In each of the 22 categories, the corporation is intended to join together all elements which enter into production, from the extraction or culture of raw materials through to the distribution of the finished product or service. This is a reversal of the "horizontal" tendency reflected in the original plan of separate corporations for industry, agriculture, commerce, and the other fields. Nevertheless, there is a secondary horizontal tie-up in the retention, in single national confederations, of the syndicates in industry, agriculture, commerce, credit, and the professions.

That the corporations are administrative organs of the State rather than autonomous economic organizations is well illustrated in the method of their formation. Each corporation is actually a council, in which an equal number of representatives from the syndicates of capital and labor operating in its field are brought together to constitute the basic framework. The council of the corporation also includes a representation of three persons designated by the Secretary of the Fascist Party, and an appropriate number of technicians and representatives of cooperative and artisan associations whose work relates to the field of the corporation's activity. The exact number of "representatives" from each of the constituent elements is fixed by decree of the Head of the Government, and varies from corporation to corporation. The smallest corporation council (15 members) is found in the Beet and Sugar Corporation; the largest council (68 members), in the Chemical Corporation. Although representa-

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCILS OF THE CORPORATIONS* (Collectively constituting the General Assembly of the National Corporative Council)

CORPORATION	REPRESENTATIVES OF: (KEY BELOW)								TOTAL
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
I. Agricultural-Industrial-Commercial Productive Cycle									
1. Cereals.....	15	15	1	1	1			3	36
2. Horticulture, Fruit and Flowers.....	13	13	2		1			3	32
3. Viticulture and Wines.....	13	13	3					3	32
4. Food Oils.....	10	10	2					3	25
5. Beets and Sugar.....	5	5	2					3	15
6. Livestock and Fish.....	18	18	3		1			3	43
7. Wood.....	13	13	2	2				3	33
8. Textiles.....	24	24	4	2	1			3	58
II. Industrial-Commercial Productive Cycle									
9. Metallurgy and Mechanics.....	30	30	1	2	1			3	67
10. Chemicals.....	31	31	2		1			3	68
11. Clothing.....	21	21	1	3				3	49
12. Paper and Printing.....	11	11		1			4	3	30
13. Building Construction.....	11	11	4	1	1			3	31
14. Water, Gas, and Electricity.....	10	10	1		1			3	25
15. Extractive Industries.....	10	10	2	1				3	26
16. Glass and Ceramics.....	13	13	1	2	1			3	33
III. Service-producing Activities									
17. Credit and Insurance:									
a. Banking Section.....	8	8				4		} 3	52
b. Savings Institutions Section.....	5†	2				9			
c. Insurance Section.....	5	5				3			
18. Professions and Arts:									
a. Legal Section.....			} 3 † {				8	} 3	41
b. Sanitary Section.....							6		
c. Technical Section.....							9		
d. Arts Section.....	2				2		8		
19. Sea and Air.....	10	10			1			3	24
20. Internal Communication:									
a. Trams and Internal Navigation Section.....	8	8						} 3	50
b. Auto-transport Section.....	5	5							
c. Auxiliary Section.....	6	6	2	2	1				
d. Radio and Telephone Section.....	2	2							
21. Theater.....	11	11				3	6	3	34
22. Hospitality.....	8	8	1					3	20
Total.....	318	316	34	19	11	19	41	66	824

Key to classification of representatives:

- A. Employers
- B. Employees
- C. Technicians
- D. Artisans
- E. Cooperatives
- F. Public Institutions
- G. Professions and Arts
- H. Partito Nazionale Fascista

* As classified and tabulated in *Compendio statistico italiano*, 1936, p. 141. Corporations in Group I were created by decree of the Head of the Government, May 29, 1934; those in Group II, by decree June 8, 1934, those in Group III, by decree June 23, 1934. Membership in all councils was designated by decree of November 8, 1934, except for one member representing employees in the Corporation of the Professions and Arts, designated by decree of March 20, 1936, thereby increasing the total membership from 823 to 824.

† Three of these represent the public employment.

‡ These members, two representing workers of the Arts Section, and one representing workers in professional agencies, take part in each of the four sections in this corporation.

tive terminology is used, the actual membership of a council is appointed by decree of the Head of the Government, and removable at any time. In each corporation, the presiding officer is a minister or undersecretary, designated by the Head of the Government, who may also preside. Most of the corporation councils held their first meetings in 1935 under the presidency of Mussolini; their subsequent meetings in 1936 and 1937 were generally under the presidency of the Minister of Corporations, Lantini. Each council also has a vice-president, designated by the Head of the Government from the Party representation on the council. As the highest ranking functionary permanently identified with the work of a single corporation, the vice-president is expected to establish himself, in the course of time, as the guiding influence in its affairs.

The division of Italian economy into 22 categories was made after serious reflection, but is not definitive. As experience with the system is acquired, there may be readjustment in the personnel of each council, and perhaps a combination of corporations to reduce the number, or, on occasion, a division of corporations to enlarge the number. The membership of the 22 corporations, as constituted on March 20, 1936, is shown above.

Note should be made of the classification of the 22 corporations in three major "cycles": (1) the 8 corporations first listed, in the "agricultural-industrial-commercial cycle," include those activities which have their origin in agricultural production, leading to manufacturing or processing and, finally, to marketing; (2) the second group of 8 corporations, in the "industrial-commercial cycle," include the remaining industrial activities, having their origin in some other than the agricultural field; (3) lastly, are the "service-producing activities," which do not participate directly in agricultural or industrial production, but which provide "services" essential to the financing of all production or to the distribution of produce. Here the operation of the overlapping horizontal principle may be observed: the two agricultural confederations, of capital and labor respectively, will be concerned with supplying representatives of capital and labor only to corporations operating in the first cycle; the corresponding confederations in industry will supply representatives to councils in the first cycle engaged in the processing of agricultural produce, but will be interested primarily in the activities of corporations in

the second cycle. The basic law on the corporations makes possible the convening of joint sessions of two or more corporation councils; as the system evolves, joint meetings of all councils in the same large-scale cycle may be expected.

Since their formation, the corporation councils have not been particularly active. The preparation of their agenda rests chiefly with the Party and the Ministry of Corporations. All the corporations have held at least one organization meeting; others, such as the Chemical Corporation, have held a large number, owing chiefly to the present concern of the Fascist government in industries relating to war and munitions. Late in 1936 and throughout 1937, the councils of the corporations began to issue proposals of a formal character, submitting them for discussion and approval to the Central Corporative Committee.

A typical corporation is the Cereals Corporation, the council of which has 36 members. Of this number, 30 represent capital and labor, which divide the number equally between them. The 15 representatives of capital are, in turn, selected from the employers' syndicates in the more important branches of cereal production: 7 represent the cereal growers, 1 represents the thrashers of grain, 3 represent the milling, paste, and confectionary processors of grain, 1 represents the baking proprietors, and, finally, 3 represent organizations concerned with the distribution and commerce in finished cereal products. Corresponding workers' organizations are similarly represented. Apart from the 30 capital-labor representatives, there are 3 representatives from the Party, 1 from agricultural technicians, 1 from consumers' cooperatives, and, finally, 1 representative from the small enterprises in the field.

Thus, like other corporations, the Cereals Corporation brings together in its council the organizations concerned with all phases of work in cereals, from the actual field work of producing grain, through thrashers, to producers, and finally to the public. Presumably, then, the membership of the corporation council is such that the activities of its affiliated interests may be adjusted and directed in accordance with government policy. If, for example, the government decrees a reduction in the price of spaghetti, the costs of agricultural labor and of factors in the production and sale of spaghetti may be adjusted to accomplish that purpose. The subjects which might suitably be discussed

by the Cereals Corporation were defined in general terms by Mussolini in 1934: the preparation of model contracts for the sale of flour, regulation of the method of distributing bread, regulation of the wheat markets, and improvements in the grinding industries.⁴ These, it will be noted, are subjects of *discussion* which may produce proposals and recommendations; eventually, the corporation council may become a legislative authority within its category, but the councils are far from being legislative organs at this time. Properly administered and directed, however, the corporations become integral components in the national economic picture, and give the government command of all organizations or persons who may have a voice or influence in the enforcement of economic policies and programs.

No one in Italy actually assumes that the corporations are genuinely representative in the sense that they have councils elected by the participating agencies or syndicates. Nor is it pretended that the corporation councils have any independent authority. The sham was more or less frankly admitted early in 1937, when the Minister of Corporations was authorized to constitute, within each council, a small, appointed committee to perform the advisory functions nominally enjoyed by the council as a whole.⁵

B. The National Corporative Council

Brought to life by the decree of March 20, 1930, the National Corporative Council is the formal equivalent of a Fascist economic legislature, although its powers are confined to advice and recommendation. In his speech of March 23, 1936, Mussolini reiterated his intention of transforming the General Assembly of this body into a Fascist and Corporative Chamber, designed to replace the Chamber of Deputies.

Technically speaking, there is no National Corporative Council. The term is descriptive of the organs which, based upon the corporation councils, work in conjunction with the Ministry of Corporations, and under its control. These organs are four in number: (1) the sections of the N. C. C., inactive, but nominally representative of the basic economic interests in agriculture, industry, commerce, credit and insurance, and the professions and arts; (2) the special permanent commissions, also nominal and inactive, which may be created for special purposes as need

arises; (3) the *Central Corporative Committee*; and (4) the *General Assembly* of the N. C. C. Of these, only the last two named require explanation.

From 1930 through 1934, the *General Assembly* of the N. C. C. was a body of approximately 175 members, which included representatives from each of the 13 national confederations then existing, the Fascist Party, and other agencies. With the institution of the 22 category corporations, its membership was widened as it became the collective meeting of all the members of all the corporation councils—a body of 823 members, at first, now of 824. In its new dress, the General Assembly held three meetings during its first two and one-half years: on November 10, 1934, March 23, 1936, and on May 15, 1937. These meetings, under the presidency of Mussolini, were entirely formal in character, being convoked in order to hear important expositions of economic policy on the part of the Head of the Government. As a working body, the General Assembly has had precisely nothing to do but to listen. The ceremonial pomp and circumstance which attends its meetings is in proportion to its theoretical supremacy among the economic organs, but apparently there is no reason for its meetings except the desire of Mussolini to prepare the Italian public for the abolition of the Chamber of Deputies, and to give expression to the unity of Italian economy.

Under these conditions, records of the “discussions” of the General Assembly need not be consulted as a record of corporative decisions. Instead one looks to the *Central Corporative Committee*. The C. C. C., a small body of approximately 50 members, comparable to a steering committee for the General Assembly, contains the most important dignitaries of the regime in the economic field: (1) practically all the ministers and the more important undersecretaries, (2) the Secretary and vice-secretaries of the Fascist Party, (3) the chief officers in such Fascist institutions as the *Dopolavoro* and the National Association of Combatants, (4) the presidents of the nine national syndical confederations, and (5) since 1934, the vice-presidents of the 22 category corporations. Members of the last group, as responsible for the routine conduct of affairs in the councils of the corporations, and also as representatives of the Fascist Party, have a special importance in the gathering.

The organization of the C. C. C. places it at the focal point in the corporative structure. It holds the same position in the

economic order that the Fascist Grand Council holds in the political-constitutional order and, in fact, approximately half of its members are also members of the Grand Council. If only for this reason, the C. C. C. has a real existence. Discussions in the C. C. C. and its committees prepared the way for the enactment of the law of 1934 on the corporations, and since that time it has been the most active instrument in the corporative system. Authority has been vested in it to give approval to the proposals emanating from the councils of the corporations and in the latter part of 1936 and throughout 1937 it held frequent meetings to discuss general problems of economic policy and to examine detailed schemes and projects. The reorganization of the Italian merchant marine in 1936, and regulations for the control of the munitions and chemical industries in 1936 and 1937 passed through its hands; wage increases of 10 to 12 per cent were ordered by its resolution of April 30, 1937. As with other important Fascist institutions, Mussolini presides at its sessions, but the C. C. C. has more to do than to listen simply to his speeches. In the General Assembly of the N. C. C., members attend in the garb of the Fascist militia, respond to the "Salute to the *Duce*" with the usual *A Noi!* and, after hearing the speech, return home. The C. C. C., by comparison, is a working body, maintaining secrecy for its discussions, and adopting resolutions which have substantive application.

As between the four agencies of the N. C. C., as a whole, there appears to be no formal division of authority or jurisdiction; sections and special committees, when constituted, speak for the entire council. Theoretically, the General Assembly, as the all-inclusive organ, has the most powerful voice; but the C. C. C. performs the actual functions—if only because in an economic dispensation, where some control must exist and where some power must be exercised, it is the body best adapted to the purpose. That it may checkmate *Il Duce*, or restrain him against his will, is unlikely in view of his power to determine its membership; but evidence points to the willingness of Mussolini to harken to its words.

C. The Ministry of Corporations

The councils of the corporations and the organs of the National Corporative Council are relatively intangible and formless; the

meeting of a committee or of a council does not require complicated administrative machinery or even a permanent office. For this reason, the Ministry of Corporations has become the most concrete manifestation of the corporative state. Created on July 2, 1926, the ministry occupies a palatial establishment in Via Vittorio Veneto in Rome, where are concentrated the administrative agencies of control over economic affairs. The National Corporative Council is attached to the ministry, which supplies the necessary office space, personnel, and administrative assistance. Mussolini has twice held the portfolio, aided by an undersecretary (at one time, two); the present minister, Lantini, served his apprenticeship under Mussolini's second tenure.

The ministry is organized around five "General Directions" and two "Offices," which are formed on typically bureaucratic lines. The titles of the major bureaus afford a clue to the nature of its work. (1) The General Direction of Personnel, Insurance, and Employment supervises the social-insurance program of the kingdom and the official employment agencies function under regulations laid down by it. (2) The General Direction for Labor, concerned with the status and welfare of labor as a whole, is combined with the Secretariat for the corporations, which arranges the agenda and makes the preparations necessary before meetings of the corporation councils and the National Corporate Council take place. (3) The General Direction of Professional Associations works hand in glove with the national confederation of professional and art workers, and assists in laying down the rules to guide the practice of such professions as teaching, law, and medicine. (4) The General Direction of Industry is the counterpart of the industrial confederations. Like the (5) General Direction of Agriculture, it maintains scrutiny over economic affairs of interest to industry (or agriculture), and collates information and statistics. The two "Offices," have a more limited scope: (1) the Office for Studies and Research maintains a large-scale publication program and employs several scores of economic experts, many of them of first rank; and (2) the Legislative Office prepares the legislative proposals and decrees sponsored by the ministry, and also studies the trend of economic legislation in other countries. There is little mystery about the Ministry of Corporations. It works constantly, with an efficiency strange to Italy, and assumes a

responsibility for the routine supervision of economic affairs.⁶ It has assembled, in its personnel, an imposing array of capable talent. Its library and research facilities are first-rate.

D. The Provincial Councils of the Corporations

Two agencies operating on the provincial level correspond to the national organs of the corporative state. In 1926, so-called Provincial Councils of Corporative Economy were organized, presumably as provincial editions of the National Corporative Council. They have generally been less active than their national counterparts. A serious move to revive them was initiated in 1937. By decree of April 28, 1937, they received a new title: Provincial Councils of the Corporations, and their membership was fundamentally reorganized to include the Federal Secretaries of the Party. Each provincial council is under the presidency of the provincial prefect, and includes (in addition to the recently added *federale*) "representatives" of the important syndical and Party organs in the province. Within the province it is intended to coordinate economic activities and adjust economic differences of a local character. Actually, meetings have been infrequent, and the theoretical functions of the councils were assumed by the Provincial Intersyndical Committees of the Fascist Party. Late in April, 1937, the Provincial Intersyndical Committees were officially divested of price-fixing powers (under the decree of October 5, 1936), and these were transferred to the Provincial Councils of the Corporations. It would be foreign to the Fascist scheme of things, however, if the P. C. C. were to perform the actual work in that field immediately.

Somewhat more important in practice have been the Provincial Offices of Corporate Economy, provincial replicas of the Ministry of Corporations and subject to its control and supervision. The offices are administrative establishments, which collect information concerning the provincial economy, care for the registration of economic establishments and concerns, and perform, as routine, much of the work of provincial coordination which theoretically pertains to the Provincial Council of the Corporations.

The increasing initiative and activity of the C. C. C. have made imperative a revitalization of provincial corporative institutions.

A definite program, along these lines, is to be maintained in 1937-1938.

3. THE FASCIST PARTY AND THE CORPORATIVE STATE

The importance of the Fascist Party has already been indicated, but formal explanation of its two most important economic instrumentalities is necessary to complete the picture of the corporative state.

Mussolini, Secretary Starace, and Fascist writers in general, frankly admit the need of extensive interest on the part of the Fascist Party in the operations of the corporative state. Mussolini has summoned the Party to motivate and safeguard the corporate state as its most precious possession and as its most distinctive contribution. As one writer has expressed his view: "Only the Party can prevent the system from becoming static and conserve perennially the dynamism of corporative action. Only the Party can surmount all class-feeling and factional pressures. Only the Party can moderate the differences between the productive categories, harmonizing them in the superior interests of the nation."

The most important Party organ is the Permanent Committee for Price Control. Under the direction of Dino Gardini, this committee functioned between 1933 and 1936 without official recognition, but its membership and functions were regularized by the royal decree-law of October 5, 1936. The Secretary of the Party is the nominal chairman of the committee, which also includes representatives from the important ministries and representatives, as well, from the national confederations. The work of the committee has devolved upon one of the Party vice-secretaries (Gardini), and his staff of economic experts and technicians. Nominally concerned only with prices, so far as the official legislation is concerned,⁸ the price committee is admirably equipped to maintain scrutiny over all aspects and phases of corporative and economic activity. The price committee formulates, with the approval of the Secretary, the economic policy of the Party, which involves, in concrete cases, the issuance of rules to be observed in the drafting of collective labor contracts and in the conciliation and settlement in other ways of disputes between capital and labor.

In the provinces, this work is conducted by the Provincial Intersyndical Committee, under the chairmanship of the Federal Secretary of the Party. The provincial committee emerged from the legislation of October 5, 1936, with new functions, but with unchanged title and membership: it includes a deputy of the prefect and representatives of the provincial syndicates. Where the Provincial Councils and Offices of Corporate Economy have been inactive, the Party Intersyndical Committees have long been going concerns; perhaps that is one reason why power and authority were not assumed by the formal and official organs. Under direction of the Secretary of the Party and the chairman of the Party price committee, the Federal Secretary and Provincial Intersyndical Committees enforce the Party policy and keep the national authorities aware of the facts of economic life, reporting information and conditions which may guide the Secretary in the issuance of orders and instructions and in the formation of policy.⁹

The error of foreign observers too frequently has been their tendency to examine and study the corporative state in terms of its official institutions: the corporations and the National Corporative Council. The Party, on the other hand, has given substance and meaning to what would otherwise be barren framework. It made *corporativismo* a reality before its institutions were created and will doubtless continue to exercise its greatly underestimated control and influence for years to come.

NOTES

1. Of which the most recent is the R. D.-L., Jan. 25, 1937, no. 484, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Apr. 24, 1937, no. 95.
2. As, for example, in A. Pennacchio, *The Corporative State*, New York, 1927, a notorious illustration.
3. A wealth of official information concerning the inauguration of the system is found in the publication of the Ministero delle Corporazioni: *Le Corporazioni*, Rome, 1935; a useful compilation of earlier laws and decrees has been published by the Istituto Nazionale Fascista di Cultura under the title: *Legislazione e ordinamento sindacale corporativo*, Rome, 1934. Generally available is Mussolini's *The Corporate State*, Florence, 1936, which appeared in an edition of 1935 under the title, *Four Speeches on the Corporative State*, containing *Il Duce's* major addresses in recent years and translations of recent decrees.
4. Ministry of Corporations, *News Notes on Fascist Corporations*, vol. 6, p. 2, November, 1934. This official propaganda publication is a useful device for following the official record of corporative activities.

5. R. D.-L., Jan. 14, 1937, no. 234, *Gazzetta ufficiale*, Mar. 16, 1937, no. 63.
6. Minister Lantini examined some current problems of the corporative state and also explained some features of the organization of his ministry in an official interview, April 6, 1937: *Popolo d'Italia*, Apr. 7, 1937.
7. C. Petrone, "Il Partito e le corporazioni," *Politica sociale*, vol. 6, pp. 181-184, 1934. See, also, the authoritative articles by Dino Gardini: "La funzione del Partito nell'economia corporativa," *Commercio*, vol. 7, pp. 175-181, 1934, and "L'Azione del Partito sui prezzi," *ibid.*, pp. 340-342, 1934.
8. The regulations of the Party Price Committee relating to prices are summarized in the *Bollettino dei prezzi*, prepared by the Istituto Centrale di Statistica, and published monthly (on the fifteenth) as a supplement to the *Gazzetta ufficiale*: vol. 10, nos. 1-4, at especially numbered appendix, pp. 1-16.
9. A reliable, although enthusiastic, explanation of the provincial inter-syndical committees is given by C. F. Childò, "Funzioni e natura dei comitati intersindacali," *Gerarchia*, vol. 16, pp. 861-863, 1936.

Chapter IX

THE FASCIST EMPIRE

1. THE EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN COLONIAL POLICY

Not until May 9, 1936, when Mussolini jubilantly announced the fact, did the Fascist dream of producing a Second Roman Empire actually take definite form. But, although Mussolini's conquest of Ethiopia earned for him the title "Founder of the Empire," his imperial task was then only beginning. Now, for the first time, Italy holds a colonial empire which is something more than a sandy waste lying on some tropical or semi-tropical shore. With the absorption of Ethiopia, Italy's empire rose to third rank, being exceeded in area only by the British and French empires; but even though the acquisition of Ethiopia trebled the population of the Fascist empire, it holds seventh place among world empires when ranked according to population.

The Italian imperial ambition did not long remain moribund after the collapse of the First Roman Empire. In the Middle Ages, Italian adventurers carried the flags of the city-states throughout the Levant, penetrating into the fringes of the African continent. Under foreign flags, the Italians Columbus and Vespucci brought new continents to life. But during the great epoch of exploration, Italy was politically unconscious, torn between hostile dynastic factions in the Peninsula, her attention given to the revival of the arts and sciences and the affairs of the church. Had there been a unified Italy in those days, as England, France, and Spain were unified, modern colonization would have had a different history, the contemporary map of the world a different form. Consequently, while Italian explorers made their contribution, and the Venetian traders reaped the profit of a lucrative commerce, Italy's imperial ambitions were private and nonpolitical, while those of other Western countries were eminently public and political.

Chagrined that unified Italy appeared on the scene "too late" to share in the major spoils of empire, Italian statesmen of the

postunification era sought to salvage what they might from the wreckage of Africa. A modest beginning was made in 1869, when Giuseppe Sapeto, an agent of the Rubattino shipping interests, purchased the Red Sea port of Assab with the tacit approval of the Italian government. This event coincided with the opening of the Suez Canal, which held out the promise of trade with the Middle and Far East. The port at Assab was designed to serve as a midway commercial base. Shortly after the French occupied Tunis in 1881, the Italian government purchased the Rubattino interest at Assab; within a few years (1885), an Italian expedition landed further north on the Red Sea coast at Massawa and, with the approval of the British, began to push inland. By 1890 sufficient territory had been taken from the native chieftains to warrant the foundation of the first Italian colony, Eritrea. Concurrently, the Italian commercial agents on the Zanzibar Coast of Africa began to acquire territory from other native rulers, and in 1908 the entity known as the colony of Somalia came into existence—although the early footholds had been established in the 1880's.

At first, the Italian public exhibited but slight interest in these developments, chiefly because Mancini's original objectives were almost entirely diplomatic: he reasoned that, given the conditions of the time, the "keys to the Mediterranean were to be found in the Red Sea." This was but one way of saying that the East African footholds lacked intrinsic value, but might be useful as wedges in the process of bringing Italy into the Mediterranean region. After 1890, the colonial initiative of Francesco Crispi brought about a change of attitude. Baron Franchetti had already written of the colonizing possibilities of the Ethiopian highland, and onto this highland Italian troops began to push in great numbers between 1890 and 1893, when they advanced as far south as Amba Alagi. At that juncture, the newly unified Empire of Ethiopia, under Menelik II, began to resist, to push the Italians backward until, on the battlefield at Adua, on March 1, 1896, the Italians were crushingly defeated. Badly burned by the incident, Italy hastily retreated from East Africa, while Crispi precipitately resigned, and a treaty of peace with Menelik was concluded. The defeat at Adua marked the end of the first stage in Italian imperialism, and not until the coming of the World War did Italy again cast covetous eyes upon

Ethiopia. The popular enthusiasm for colonies which Crispi's venture had excited died away.

Ten years after the disaster at Adua, a new generation of Italian statesmen began to look across *Mare Nostrum*. The protagonist of the colonial revival was Giovanni Giolitti, who was concerned, not with more distant Ethiopia, but with the Turkish possessions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, immediately to the south of the Island of Sicily. For several years, Giolitti prepared the way by concluding diplomatic agreements with the major powers; then, when the Young Turks menaced his ambition by threatening to place the Turkish house in order, Giolitti dispatched his preposterous ultimatum of September 26, 1911, demanding absurd guarantees for the protection of Italian life and property in Tripolitania. As anticipated, the Turks refused to accept the conditions, and on October 4, 1911, with the bombardment of Tripoli, the Italo-Turkish War began. One year later, on October 18, 1912, the signature of the Treaty of Lausanne-Ouchy transferred to Italy the substance of the Turkish sovereignty over the north African vilayets of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. From 1912 through 1915, Italian occupation was only nominal; with the outbreak of war in 1915, the Italian garrisons were withdrawn and Italian colonial activity abruptly subsided.

After the war, Fascists began to reassert Italian domination in Libya—the collective name given the two colonies, and the name of the unified colony after 1934. With Luigi Federzoni in the Colonial Ministry, and Giuseppe Volpi Governor of Tripolitania, the offensive against the rebellious Senussi was resumed. After nearly ten years of spasmodic fighting, Italian occupation became a reality when General Rodolfo Graziani completed the "pacification" of that powerful secret association. This campaign was viewed by Fascists as a tremendous success, a great source of prestige; but, underneath their bold exteriors, Fascist administrators knew full well that Libya, because of its deficiency in water and tillable soil, would never prove satisfactory as a population outlet or as a military reservoir, whether in men or materials. Even optimistic Undersecretary of State for Colonies, Alessandro Lessona, was reconciled to a maximum Italian population of 500,000 in all Libya (1932).¹ At the time of his prediction, there were but 44,000 Italians in Libya, after

twenty years of formal occupation. Realization of the natural limitations of Libya forced the Fascists to direct their attention, once again, to East Africa.

In Eritrea, the Italian situation had remained without great change since 1896; in Somalia, on the other hand, Italian occupation had become a mere fiction. The first Fascist Governor of Somalia, Count De Vecchi, began the second Fascist "pacification" program in 1925, and by 1928 had succeeded. In August of that year, a treaty of commerce and friendship was concluded with Ethiopia, the common neighbor of both Eritrea and Somalia, the only territory separating them. Expectations of peaceful penetration in Ethiopia soon proved illusory. On the pretext supplied by a series of border incidents, the most notable being at Wal Wal (on the Ethiopian-Somalian frontier) on December 5, 1934, the Fascist war machine began intensive preparations for the complete conquest of the mountain empire. Hurling his thunderbolts at the world in general, and at the British Empire in particular, Mussolini launched the attack on October 3, 1935, without any formal declaration of war. For nearly five months, the combined Army-Black Shirt enterprise gave a dismal exhibition of military blundering, but suddenly, in late February and March, Marshal Badoglio struck a series of brilliant military blows, and a shattered Ethiopian resistance collapsed. Dessie, the Ethiopian general headquarters, fell on April 15; on May 5, Badoglio entered Addis Ababa; and, on May 9, 1936, Mussolini proclaimed Italian sovereignty.

For that day, Fascists had been preparing for some 15 years. Even before the March on Rome, Italian nationalists had striven mightily to reconstruct the colonial "conscience" of Italy, to make Italians aware of their destiny across the sea. An intensive propaganda for this purpose was conducted with the aid of industrialists who sought raw materials and new markets; by bankers seeking profitable returns on investments; by politicians concerned with promoting their political futures; by students and scholars interested in the study of the Middle East, its languages, arts, and institutions; by scientists and missionaries genuinely conscious of an "obligation" to bring the standards and advantages of civilization to backward natives; by professional patriots seeking expansion simply for the sake of a larger, and presumably greater, Italy; and by Fascists aiming

to consolidate their own position by recreating the glories of Imperial Rome. In the Peninsula dozens of private and public organizations—the Fascist Colonial Institute, the Colonial Institute of Agriculture, the Italian Naval League, the African Society of Italy, and the Royal Italian Geographical Society, to name a few—began to send expeditions into Africa, to publish scores of periodicals and thousands of books avowedly designed to touch the sentiment of the Italian people. When the decision was reached to conquer Ethiopia, there was no difficulty in directing this tremendous propaganda in the right direction, and even before troops began to march, the Italian people were convinced that Italy was about to protect her natural rights, that she was the chosen representative of civilized peoples everywhere, and that the wealth and resources of Ethiopia would solve all problems of Italian economy.

Mussolini's diplomacy, after 1922, was concentrated in the theme of expansion. The Fiume question had done much to publicize the Fascist movement in early years; and by the Nettuno convention of January, 1924, Fiume was formally added to Italy. With France, negotiations were conducted to protect and maintain lines of communication in Libya. With the British, diplomatic negotiations produced an adjustment of the boundaries between Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Libya, and rectification of frontiers between Italian Somalia and adjoining British possessions. A constant Italian thesis revolved around the fulfillment of the obligations of Article XIII of the secret treaty of London of April 26, 1915, which brought Italy into the World War on the side of the Allies. The "compensation" clause of Article XIII promised British and French territories in Africa to Italy in the event that those powers gained territories for themselves in consequence of the war. By the Treaty of Rome, January 7, 1935, the obligations of France were satisfied with the cession of some 44,000 miles of Sahara added to Libya; the British obligations were fulfilled by the London agreement of July 15, 1924, whereby Jubaland was turned over to Italy, and added to the territories of Somalia. With the same two powers, Italy sought a confirmation of her "rights" in Ethiopia; an original tripartite treaty of 1906 between them proved advantageous; in 1925, the British were persuaded to give formal recognition to the claims of Italy on the Ethiopian

highland, in return for recognition of British priority in the utilization of the waters of the Ethiopian Lake Tsana. An occasional Fascist diplomatic sally—such as the proposed Four-Power Pact of 1934—was couched in terms of European politics and security. Such episodes were exceptions to the general rule, however, and the term “Fascist foreign policy” is almost synonymous with “Fascist colonial policy.” Not even the acquisition of Ethiopia settled the Fascist ambition; Mussolini had spoken too frequently of the Mediterranean as properly an “Italian lake,” to withdraw into seclusion. Hence, 1936 and 1937 witnessed a continuation of the “expansion” theme, with Fascists active in the affairs of Spain, Austria, and the Danubian region generally.

2. ITALIAN EAST AFRICA

By the basic regulation of June 1, 1936, the territories of Ethiopia were merged with those of the former colonies of Eritrea and Somalia to produce a new Italian East Africa, governed by a viceroy in Addis Ababa.² The new colony was redivided into five basic *governî*, each under control of a governor, responsible to the Governor-General in Addis Ababa. Each of the *governî*

ITALIAN EAST AFRICA, 1936

<i>Governo</i>	CAPITAL	AREA (EST.), SQUARE MILES	POPULATION (EST.)
Eritrea.....	Asmara	46,425	1,000,000
Amhara.	Gondar	86,100	2,000,000
Galla-Sidamo....	Galla	136,293	1,600,000
Harrar.....	Harrar	77,992	1,400,000
Somalia.....	Mogadiscio	271,042	1,300,000
<i>Governatorato</i> of Addis Ababa...	.....	2,820	300,000 (Metropolitan area)
Total.....	.....	620,672	7,600,000

is divided, for administrative purposes, into commissariats, 44 in all, residencies, vice-residencies, and municipalities, all administered by persons on the professional rolls of the colonial ministry.

Practically all governing responsibilities are centered in the Governor-General at Addis Ababa who, since June, 1936, has been Marshal Rodolfo Graziani. To assist the Governor-General, there are set up two advisory bodies. One of these, known as the Government Council, is an ex officio group of some 30 important government officials; the other is the *Consulta*, a body which includes all the members of the Government Council, but also a delegation of Italians and natives appointed by the Governor-General, and which is to advise on broad questions of policy. In practice, the *Consulta* has been a meaningless institution, but the creation of it signified a departure from earlier Fascist policy, which denied the representative principle in the colonies as in the Peninsula. All the important positions in East Africa are filled by military personalities, and while civil government theoretically prevails, there is little evidence of this in practice. No provision is made for elections in any form. A system of courts is maintained for both Italians and natives. In the native courts, cognizance is taken of the fundamental principles of native law, whether Christian or Moslem; and, in the settlement of civil controversies, Italian authorities seldom intervene. In this field, the Italians acquired a notable amount of experience in the former Eritrea and Somalia.

From the beginning, the Fascist administration in Ethiopia has recognized the need of exploiting the resources of the country with the aid and collaboration of all natives. In February, 1937, following an assault upon the Governor-General, drastic punitive measures were taken and some serious blunders were made. But this incident is not likely to have any lasting consequences.

For the colonization of East Africa, the Fascists have laid ambitious plans. In the Ministry of Italian Africa (formerly, before May, 1937, the Ministry of Colonies), there exist five distinct advisory councils—for labor, transport, commerce, industry, and agriculture—to lay out precise plans for the exploitation of Ethiopian resources and for the transportation of Italian colonists to the scene. In the first year, millions of *lire* were expended on public works construction, notably in roads, and Mussolini has declared his willingness to spend countless more millions and perhaps decades of time in the attempt to make Ethiopia a profitable enterprise. High altitudes and untenable

climate make success in the colonization program somewhat problematical; but, in any event, the effort must be made, as Fascists see it, to develop resources of oil, cotton, rubber, and other tropical products in order to render Italy's military-strategic position more advantageous and to facilitate the operation of the corporate state. The program indicates, graphically, the place of Ethiopia in Italian military plans, whether as a basis for operations in Africa and the Middle East, or as a troop reservoir and a reservoir of strategic raw materials. To accelerate the rate of exploitation in East Africa, a "six-year plan" was officially sanctioned by the Council of Ministers early in June, 1937.

3. LIBYA

Libya, under the control of a Governor-General, has been a unified colony since the joining of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1934. This colony, consisting primarily of sands of the Sahara, is very sparsely populated, with an area of 729,324 square miles and a population of only 716,123—less than one person per square mile. Economically, the colony adds little to the Italian economy, since the dates, olives, and citrus fruits grown on the northern coast duplicate most of the products of Italian agriculture. As a military-naval base in the Mediterranean, which places Italy in a position to cut the line of communication in that sea, Libya has a peculiar importance.

The *Duce* of Fascism honored Libya with his presence in 1925; in March, 1937, following the annexation of Ethiopia, he returned once again to promise the natives that Italy was prepared to adopt a more humane and conciliatory policy toward them. The thousands of Berbers slaughtered during the course of Graziani's pacification of the Senussi, and the properties of rebellious natives which the Italians had confiscated, had engendered in the heart of the Libyan native a smoldering spirit of resentment. During the Ethiopian war, however, the natives of Libya sent several thousand "volunteers" into East Africa, and, on the whole, behaved perfectly. This behavior, Mussolini declared in various speeches delivered during his 1937 visit, decided the Italian government upon a new policy. How "new" this will be remains for the future.

In Rome, in April, 1937, the Council of Ministers approved a series of new royal decrees for the reorganization of the Libyan system of government. Responsibility remains in the hands of the Governor-General, who is to be "advised" (when he wishes it) in the future by a native council, appointed by him. Natives were made eligible for appointment to important positions in the administration, especially in the government of the localities. Most of the changes, however, were changes in names and forms, and not greatly in substance. For example, the four "commissariats" which, between 1934 and 1937, became the major territorial subdivisions of the colony, acquired in 1937 the new title of "provinces," remaining under control of "prefects" who displace the former regional commissioners. The four provinces of Libya, as they range from west to east, are the following, taking their names from their chief cities and capitals: Tripoli, Misurata, Bengasi, and Derna. Provinces, as in the case of the *governi* of East Africa, are divided into commissariats, residencies, vice-residencies, and municipalities. The latter, in imitation of the local government system of the Peninsula, are each in charge of an appointed *podestà*, who is to be advised in the future by a local council, appointed with regard for economic categories.

Evidence of the constructive efforts of Italy in Libya is not difficult to find. Roads and railroads have solved the problem of transportation. In such cities as Tripoli and Bengasi, the Italian quarter, ample in size and supplied with large numbers of modern Italian buildings, is a model of colonial achievement. But while Fascists have spent millions with characteristic generosity, little else has gone from Italy to Libya. Nearly all the 44,000 Italians resident there live in the cities, as agents of Italian commercial companies and to serve the commercial needs of the natives. An intensive colonization program, pursued diligently for more than five years, chiefly through the instrumentality of the *Ente* for the Colonization of Libya, has managed to place some 8,000 Italian farmers on the better agricultural lands of the colony. The saturation point is not far distant. For that reason, when Ethiopia had been acquired, the Italians lost their enthusiasm for the demographic colonization of Libya, and that colony will be retained for the future almost exclusively for its theoretical strategic advantages.

4. OTHER ITALIAN POSSESSIONS

The two colonies noted above—Italian East Africa and Libya—are administered as colonies from Rome, through the Ministry for Italian Africa. In addition, Italy has two other non-Italian territorial connections, both administered through the Italian Foreign Office. The more negligible of these is the Italian concession at Tientsin, in North China, which covers approximately one quarter of a square mile, and has a population, chiefly native, of approximately 6,300. Tientsin represents Italy's stake in the Far East, established after the Boxer Rebellion, but the activities of the Japanese in Hopei province have nullified all Italian commercial aims in that region.

Somewhat more important are the Italian Islands of the Aegean, or the fourteen islands of the Dodecanese, with an area of 1,041 square miles and a population of 130,000. These islands were acquired as a by-product of the Italo-Turkish War for Libya of 1911–1912, but not until the signature of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 was Italian sovereignty fully recognized and established. The islands are adjacent to the Turkish mainland, and a constant source of friction between the Fascists and the Turkish Nationalists under Kamal Atatürk. They are administered by a governor, appointed by the Foreign Office. Now heavily fortified, they represent the Italian strategic interest in the eastern Mediterranean, and to a degree offset the British advantage at Cyprus and Suez. The islands have a relatively dense population of Christian Greeks and Turkish Moslems and a limited artisan and agricultural economy, and conditions are so stable that Italians have never given consideration to the possibility of an Italian colonization. Again, the Dodecanese, like the Italian colonies in the technical sense, are held almost exclusively for strategic purposes.

NOTES

1. Lessona, *Scritti e discorsi coloniali*, p. 75, Milan, 1935.
2. Cf. H. A. Steiner, "The Government of Italian East Africa," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 30, pp. 884 ff., 1936.

Chapter X

FASCIST IMPONDERABLES

For itself, Fascism has set a high standard of achievement. Manifestly difficult problems have been self-created by its aspiration to develop, among a people naturally averse to strong and paternal government, a high degree of political consciousness and by its attempt to construct, in impoverished Italy, a self-contained national economy. Special techniques, in both the domestic and foreign spheres, have been developed with those objectives in mind.

Regimentation and control were natural corollaries of the Fascist ambition, for Fascism proposed to *do* and to *make*. The regimentation—the bringing of things into conformity with the regime—gave spectacular color to the first years of Fascism. This aspect of Fascism has been so well and often examined that there seems to be little need for the analysis in the present volume of such themes as (1) the ruthless denial of political rights to individuals whose personal views differ from those of the police-state, (2) the reorganization and integration of the educational system to the end that there might be rigid and thorough indoctrination in the political and economic theories of Fascism, (3) the organization of youth in political-military formations so that, even before the “premilitary” training period which precedes conscription is begun, youth is accustomed to military discipline, (4) the seizure of religion to supplement and to reinforce the moral program of the regime, (5) the integration of the family into the hierarchy of the State in order that it may have more disciplined sons to bear its arms, (6) the repression of independent labor organization, and a dozen other subjects. It need only be observed here that ~~these tactics and programs developed with respect to internal affairs, that they now represent accomplished facts, and that the crusading and revolutionary fervor which attended them has, with the consolidation of the regime, given way to a desire to maintain a more static balance.~~

The future will be disposed to judge the Fascist regime by its constructive and often wholesome improvements in the Italian scene. Visible to every eye, and unduly persuasive to the judgment of foreigners, are new public buildings, schools and universities, apartment houses and dwellings, modernized industrial plants, roads and highways, improved railway and communication services, and elaborate monuments and archaeological displays. Since the regime rejects the materialistic conception and exhorts its subjects to abnegation and self-sacrifice, pride in mere construction would appear anomalous. But while the official definition of "happiness" is not identified with hedonism, the individual is free to sense pride in the achievements of the nation. With somewhat less emphasis upon the State, Fascism might approximate a utilitarian conception of the "public good." Is the public good identified with the State, or with the collective association of individuals? And where is the balance to be struck between the welfare of the individual as individual and the individual as a member of the social collectivity? In concrete terms, so far as Fascist Italy is concerned, where is the balance to be struck between the physical improvements which are apparent to every eye and the sacrifices made by individuals, and the restraints imposed upon them in order that they may be realized? Is it a tragedy that the bouyancy of the Italian spirit has been largely destroyed by the mechanical regimentation of a regime? The paradox is complete when we realize that this tremendous mechanical regimentation is the product of a philosophy basically idealistic.

During its first decade, Fascism thought exclusively in terms of Italy. Whether it was the result of the depression, or of a fear that international Communism menaced the Fascist experiment, or whether it was simply a feeling that an old record had been played long enough, Fascism at its first decennial began to look abroad. Political doctrines refuse to acknowledge international frontiers in principle. The church set aside its pacifist predilections to fight for the universality of its doctrine; later, democracy engaged in the same effort; and the twentieth century finds two doctrines, Fascism and Communism, struggling to bring about the collapse of democracy and each to establish itself at the expense of the other as the successor. Since 1917, the international revolution of Communism has notably slackened in pace,

particularly after Stalin began to distinguish between the continuous revolution of Trotsky and the eventual revolution of pure "Leninism";¹ thereupon the Soviet revolution became more Russian than international. Meanwhile, Fascism has steadily sharpened its international vision. It has become a more immediate threat to democracy than Communism, with all its willful thinking and theoretical postulates, has ever been.

Fascist writers have supplied the theoretical framework of the Fascist International. The remark attributed to Mussolini: "Fascism is not an article for exportation," has been repudiated, for, as one writer puts it, "This is a banal saying which tends to maintain in absolute stasis the principles of the revolution. . . . The March on Rome is the first historic chapter in the universal revolutionary march of Fascism."² In 1936, the march on Addis Ababa was an African edition of the March on Rome. In Mussolini's *Popolo d'Italia*, a similar keynote was struck editorially on April 19, 1935: "A revolution which is not universal is not a revolution. Once a revolution demonstrates that it has no extra-national repercussions of any kind, it is filed away in the records of history with the movements of a subversive, insurrectional, or reactionary character. . . . The universalization of our principles promises a future more happy and productive than the present, not only with respect to Italy but throughout the world. . . ." Two months later, *L'Universalità fascista*, the monthly organ of the Fascist international movement, observed: "Fascism . . . is a vision of life, a political faith, a revolution which faces and solves problems common to all western civilization. . . ."³ Other writers, more imaginative, have described the organization of a future Fascist League of Nations, in which the present League and the International Labor Office would be replaced by an International Corporative Council which, in turn, would cap the Fascist hierarchy and authorize the corporative institutions of the member-states to proceed with their programs!⁴

In this movement, the year 1934 was critical. An organization meeting of the Committees of Action for the Universality of Rome took place at Montreux (Switzerland) on December 16-17 of that year. On that occasion, representatives of 15 national Fascist movements assembled to hear President Eugenio Coselschi sound the keynote of the international movement. In his address, he remarked:

Given the peculiar character of this Congress, you do not find among you official representatives of the Fascist Party or of German Nazism. The reason is obvious. In Italy, as in Germany, the Party is synonymous with the State; there cannot be the one without the other.

In Italy the corporative organization has become a reality. When this situation is established and consolidated everywhere, there will no longer be occasion to convene congresses of Fascist and corporative movements. We will then find ourselves in the presence of a League of Nations which will not have been born of the Utopian reveries of Mr. Wilson. This League of Nations, which will be produced by our efforts, will be, in truth, a real "fraternity" of peoples, the impregnable bastion of a real and lasting peace, based on order and justice, a peace which will rest upon the immovable foundations of a new and vigorous flowering of European civilization.⁵

By resolution of the ~~Montreux Congress~~ there has been set up a permanent "committee of co-ordination" which held meetings in Paris (January 30, 1935), Amsterdam (March 29, 1935), and Montreux (September 11, 1935), to find ways and means of propagandizing collectively and effectively for the cause of international Fascism.⁶ All committees have a negative (anti-Communist) and a positive (pro-Fascist) program, the first fruit of which was borne during the Italo-Ethiopian war when the organs of the different national movements conducted a steady barrage against the sanctions of the League of Nations, to which their governments subscribed. This campaign played no small part in building up a public opinion averse to sanctions and in sabotaging the program.

The non-Italian realities of Fascism are found in the regimes of Salazar in Portugal, of Schuschnigg in Austria, of Franco at Burgos in Spain, and in regimes, some entirely Fascist, in the Baltic and Balkan countries. Fascist writers, always on the alert for sympathetic signs abroad,⁷ have detected (for the Italian public) symptoms of Fascism in movements so diverse as the American New Deal⁸ and the Vienna program (1929) of the Ukrainian National Movement of Col. Konovaletz.⁹

Advocates of democracy, however, are still entitled to take comfort from the map of Europe. They will find that a diagonal line drawn from the Pyrenees to the White Sea separates, in a general way, Fascist from democratic Europe. Long acquaintance with genuine democracy has been enjoyed only by the countries to the north and west of that line: Great Britain, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, in

addition to Switzerland. Looking to the west, viewing with a certain admiration British institutions, these are the countries which have supplied democratic America with the bulk of its population. At least in northwestern Europe, long experience with democracy has evoked the passionate desire to retain it at all costs, even when this requires French conservatives to lend their support to a popular front with the Marxian Socialists of all tinges. For Fascism, this is sufficient to mark France as one of the "Communist" enemies of Fascist order and discipline, just as the admission of the U.S.S.R. into the League of Nations in 1934 satisfied Mussolini that the League had become a vehicle of Communist world revolution. In the countries lying to the south and east of the hypothetical line, there have been fleeting flirtations with the Goddess of Liberty, but no consummation of the marriage. It was there that unrest and discontent, in the trial days of democracy, bred Fascism.

Fascism presents itself to the world with complete confidence as the final and definitive panacea for its crises. It makes its appearance when the twentieth century, in the realm of politics, is characterized by complex confusion and bitter animosities. Before the World War, it seemed possible to guide political, economic, and moral thinking into well-defined channels. But postwar crises proved the fallacies of that simplicity. Even though man may be a political animal, politics has always been among the lesser of his loves; economics, despite the increasing tension of its pull, has only been one of many influences upon human behavior; and religion no longer guides the destinies of man, if it ever did. Modern government revolves around political power, operating even in the economic field, and conducted along moral and spiritual lines. In that juncture, Fascism pretends to offer the authoritative synthesis of all ideas—political, economic, moral, religious, psychological—the last word in prescribing the single dose by which all the ills of society, universally, will be cured.

What lends superficial plausibility to Fascism is the frankness with which it faces the fact of a dynamic world which is currently passing through one of its major historical transitions. But, unlike the religious Reformation or the economic Industrial Revolution or the establishment of democracy in the nineteenth century, the present crisis is apparent in all spheres of human

action. New standards of moral values are emerging, new techniques of production have already been realized, and political institutions are groping for governmental forms ideally suited to the new situation. Fascism, convinced that the crisis of the present is a crisis *of* and not *in* system, attracts the support of like-minded pessimists, and achieves, on a small scale, a deceptive measure of success which encourages experimentation with it elsewhere.

The solution which Fascism has to offer is hardly more than the regimentation of modern technology on the basis of quasi-medieval and semitheological conceptions of moral order. Unless it is altered, it is self-defeating. But by advancing its own brash hypothesis, Fascism has performed the historical function of precipitating a solution of the crisis everywhere apparent on the border line of politics and economics. It has done more than anything else to jolt the complacency of self-assured democracy, long since become static, into an awareness of the need of placing its own house in order. Democracy in Europe is destined to emerge from the test of its struggle with Fascism with a more secure knowledge and appreciation of its own *raison d'être*.

Democracy should learn, on the basis of the extreme example of Fascism, how to reconcile individual liberty with the regulation and control of social affairs necessitated by the general welfare. It may learn, too, that as between strong leadership in a democracy and absolute dictatorship in a Fascist state, there are differences of kind as well as of degree. With knowledge of the Fascist experiment, it may come to realize the futility of applying nineteenth-century standards in the contemporary world. Before the twentieth century expires, democracy may yet, with authoritarian examples before it, crown with success its search for a compatible twentieth-century standard of political and economic obligation.

NOTES

1. J. Stalin, *The October Revolution*, New York, 1934, *passim*.
2. F. Paolini, in *Annali del fascismo*, vol. 4, pp. 13-14, 1934; cf. R. Ducci, "La diffusione del fascismo nel mondo," *Politica*, vol. 38, pp. 17-44, 1934.
3. G. Maranini, "L'essenza universale del fascismo," vol. 7, p. 468, 1935.
4. N. Pinto, "Internazionale corporativa," *Critica fascista*, vol. 13, pp. 299-303, 1935.

5. *Comités d'Action pour l'Universalité de Rome, Réunion de Montreux, 16-17 décembre 1934-XIII*, pp. 34-35, Rome, 1935.
6. C.A.U.R.: *Notiziario settimanale d'informazioni dei Comitati d'Azione per la Universalità di Roma*, various issues in 1935.
7. G. De Michelis, *La crisi mondiale e il corporativismo*, Rome, 1935. A summary of results, from a different point of view, is given by L. Adam, "Corporations et constitutions: le régime des corporations dans quelques constitutions et législations récentes," *Bulletin trimestriel de la Société de Législation Comparée*, vol. 64, pp. 214-239, 1935.
8. B. Mussolini, Speech of November 10, 1934.
9. L. Mainardi, "Fascismo ucraino," *L'Universalità fascista*, vol. 7, pp. 623-627, 1935.

A NOTE TO OFFICIAL ITALIAN PUBLICATIONS

Texts of laws and decrees are officially published in the daily *Gazzetta ufficiale del Regno d'Italia*, issued by the Ministry of Justice; annually, the permanent legislation is issued, in several volumes, under the title: *Raccolta ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti del Regno d'Italia*. Each of the ministries publishes a monthly *Bollettino ufficiale* in which appear not only the laws and decrees relating to the ministry, but also ministerial decrees and other instruments not published in the *Gazzetta ufficiale*; those of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Finance, East Africa, and Corporations have the greatest utility. Comparable *Bollettini ufficiali* are issued in each of the colonies, but the publication for Italian East Africa now appears under the title: *Giornale ufficiale dell'A. O. I.* So-called "officious" publications (issued by public authorities, but not "official") reprint the texts of more important legislative acts: the Secretariats-General of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies combine to issue (since 1927), in three numbers annually, a *Bollettino parlamentare*, for which an index (1927-1936) appeared early in 1937. The same offices also published *La legislazione fascista*, 1922-1928 and *La legislazione fascista*, 1929-1934 (in two volumes, each, with appendices), which are invaluable indices to the legislative labors of the Fascist regime; for the convenience of the legislators, they also publish, occasionally, a *Manuale parlamentare*, of which the last (1934) was prepared for the XXIX Legislature; this volume contains basic texts, as well as legislative and ministerial histories since 1848.

Statistical information is available in the publications of the *Istituto Centrale di Statistica* (Rome). An *Annuario statistico italiano* and a *Compendio statistico italiano* are issued annually. Its *Bollettino mensile di statistica* and *Bollettino dei prezzi* appear, monthly, as supplements to the *Gazzetta ufficiale*. The *Istituto* is also the official census-taking agency: its seven-volume report on the census of 1931 appeared between 1931 and 1935 as *VII censimento generale della popolazione 21 aprile 1931*; reports of the VIII Census (April 21, 1936) are in process.

Each of the ministries maintains an extensive publication program, issuing monographs and collections of laws at irregular intervals. Many of these attain a high standard. Generally useful are the monthly reviews which most of the ministries publish: *Sindacato e corporazione* and *Il diritto del lavoro* (Ministry of Corporations); *Nazione militare* (War Ministry); *Rivista marittima* (Ministry of Marine); *Rivista aeronautica* (Air Ministry); and *Rivista delle colonie* (Colonial-East African Ministry), among the more important.

Official agencies also concern themselves with the publication of bibliographical data. Twice yearly, a *Supplemento bibliografico* is issued in connection with the *Bollettino parlamentare*. The Library of the Chamber of

Deputies publishes catalogues of its accessions relating to Fascism, the third edition of which (1935) is titled: *Opere sul fascismo possedute dalla Biblioteca della Camera Fascista al 28 ottobre 1934*. In May, 1937, the Ministries of National Education and of Press and Propaganda announced a monthly bibliographical review: *Il libro italiano*. A comparable review has been issued (unofficially) since 1925, as *La bibliografia fascista*.

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